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ABSTRACT

Growing Up Strong (GUS) is a curriculum designed to develop strong mental health in kindergarten through sixth grade students. This document contains a GUS teacher's guide for kindergarten and first-grade classrooms and masters of materials that can be sent home with children to promote family involvement in GUS. Part I of the four-part teacher's guide provides background information about the program. Part II includes a sample letter to families, information on the GUS Observable Behavior Checklist, tips on using family involvement information and activity handouts, and information on making and using Gus and Gussie dolls and puppets. Part III offers suggestions on classroom management, task-oriented instruction, and ways of making positive comments to children and rewarding students. Part IV provides 28 in-class GUS activities for young children, designed to help children become aware of themselves and of others and develop socially, creatively, emotionally, and verbally. Part V presents reinforcement activities for children with special needs, covering sensory learning, hygiene, nutrition, feelings, and other topics. The materials designed for children to take home include: (1) information for parents on GUS and primary prevention; (2) information sheets for parents covering such topics as helping children become better problem solvers, letting children make choices, and going to the grocery store with children; and (3) activity sheets for children that teach about such topics as maintaining good hygiene, setting the table, and putting toys away. Sample awards for children and GUS promotional materials are attached. (AC)

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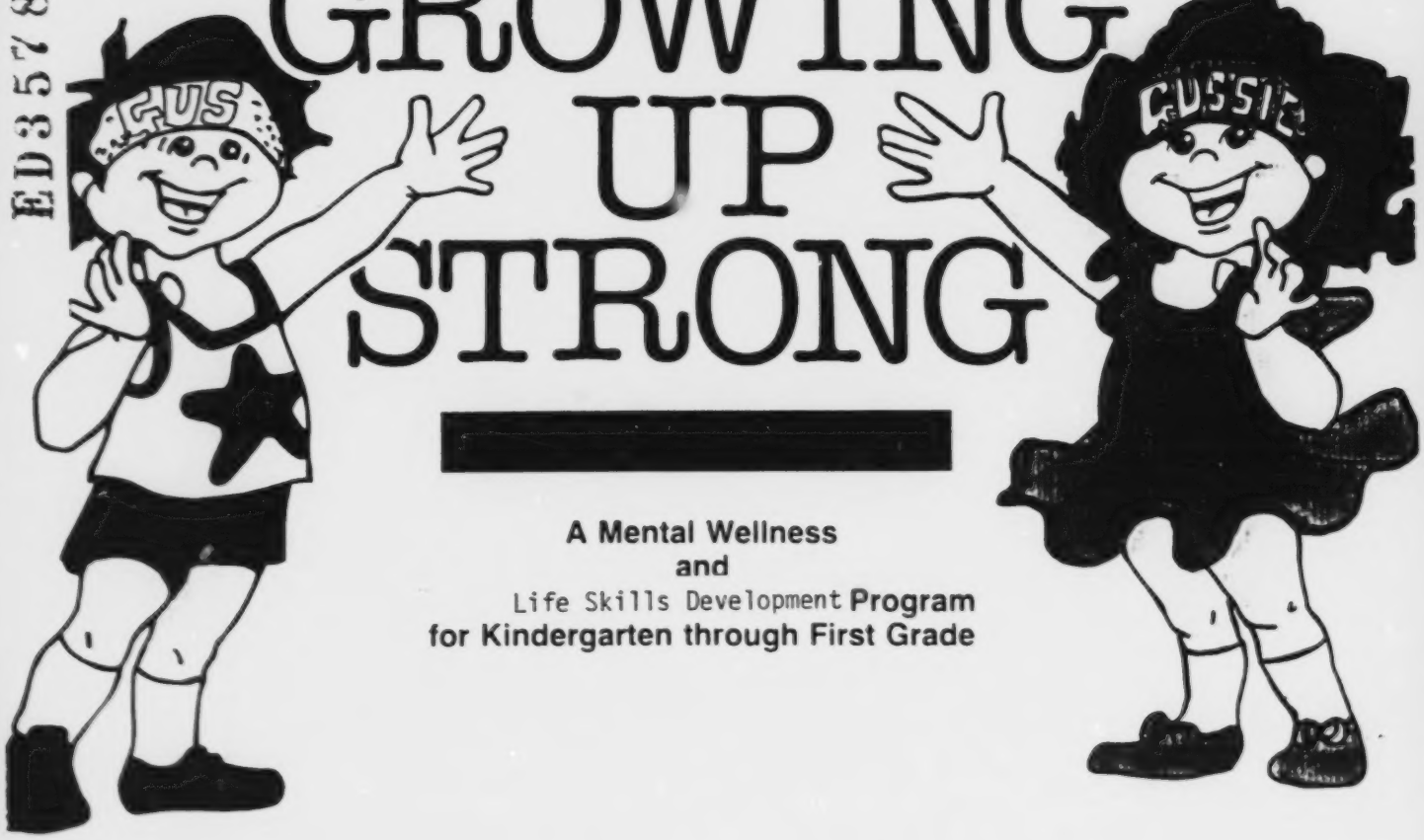
# GROWING UP STRONG




**A Mental Wellness**
**and**
Life Skills Development **Program**
**for Kindergarten through First Grade**

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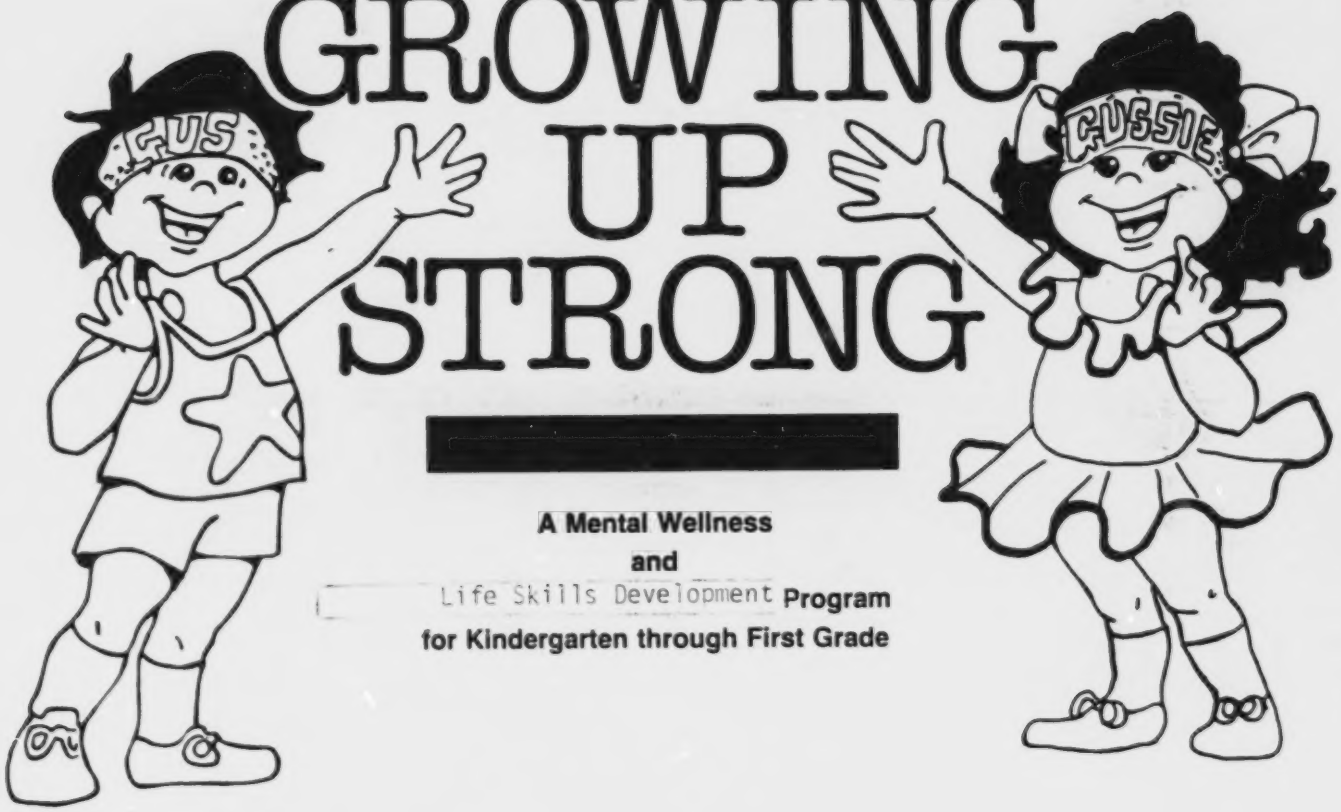
PS 020850

Teacher's Guide

# GROWING UP STRONG

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**Moore (Oklahoma) Public Schools** kindergarten, developmental and first grade teachers, elementary counselors, administrators, children, and families for their role in developing these materials

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# GROWING UP STRONG

A Mental Wellness

and

Life Skills Development Program

for Kindergarten through First Grade

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## Dedication

**This edition of GROWING UP STRONG for Kindergarten through First Grade is dedicated to the following individuals:**

**Jerry Rippetoe**, Superintendent, Moore Public Schools, for his leadership in funding primary prevention programs for young children

**Roger Pryor**, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education and Director of Personnel, Moore Public Schools, for his cooperation and enthusiastic support for the piloting of GUS K–1

**Pat Ross**, Director of Student Services, Moore Public Schools, for her ongoing commitment to mental wellness and the prevention of chemical abuse and her dedication to the children and families in Moore, Oklahoma

## Contents


I. **About GROWING UP STRONG** ..... 5
- What Is GUS? ..... 6
- How Did GUS Begin? ..... 6
- Why GUS? ..... 6
- An Overview of the GUS Program ..... 8

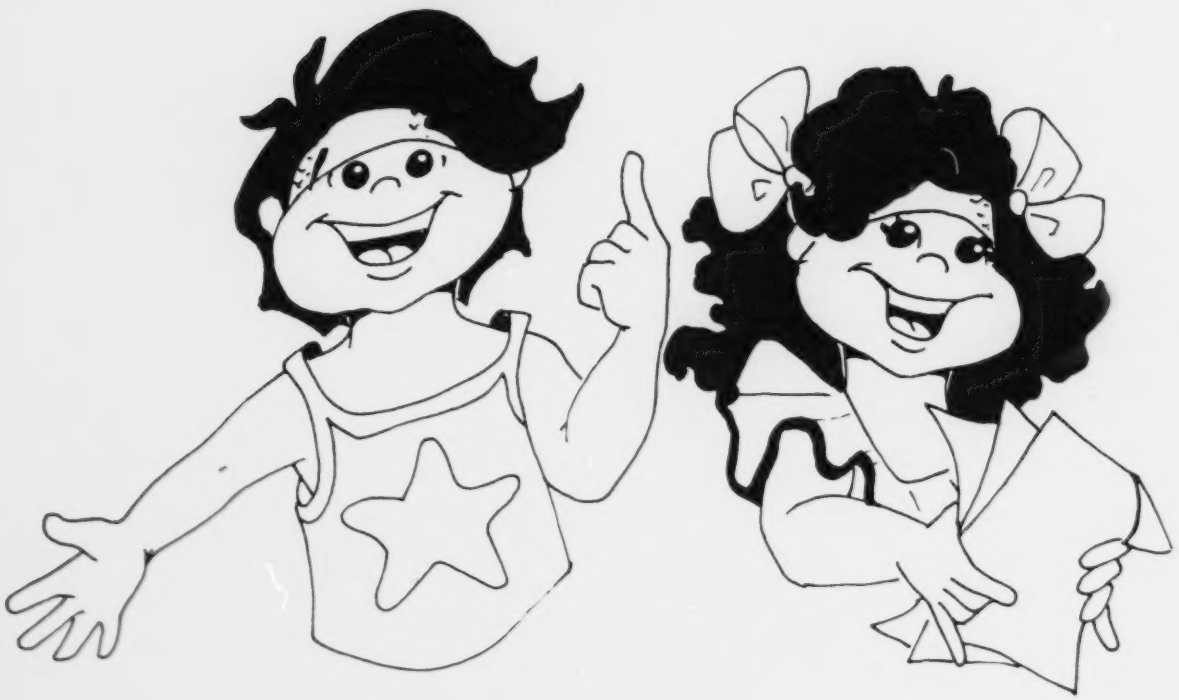
II. **Using GROWING UP STRONG** ..... 9
- How to Use GROWING UP STRONG ..... 10
- Sample Introductory Letter to Families ..... 11
- Using the GUS and GUSSIE Observable Behavior Checklist ..... 12
- GUS and GUSSIE Observable Behavior Checklist ..... 13
- Making the GUS and GUSSIE Dolls and Puppets ..... 16
- GUS and GUSSIE Puppet Patterns ..... 17
- How to Use the GUS and GUSSIE Dolls and Puppets ..... 21
- GUS and GUSSIE Come to Class ..... 22

III. **GUS and GUSSIE Talk with Teachers** ..... 23
- Classroom Management Tips ..... 24
- Teaching a Task ..... 25
- Positive Comments ..... 26
- Happy-Day-Feelings Awards ..... 27
- Award-O-Grams ..... 29
- Happygrams ..... 31
- Letter from the Teacher ..... 33

IV. **GUS and GUSSIE Curriculum** ..... 35
- Introduction ..... 36
- "Me" Book: Covers and Plans ..... 37
- "Me" Book: Some of My Friends ..... 38
- "Me" Book: Food I Like ..... 39
- "Me" Book: More Ideas ..... 40
- Experience Charts ..... 41
- "Body Parts" Experience Chart ..... 42
- Fun with Feelings ..... 43
- "Angry" Experience Chart ..... 44
- Family Survey Chart ..... 45
- My Family/My Home ..... 46
- My Home: Block Play ..... 47
- Inside My Home ..... 48
- Show and Share: Learning About Family Members ..... 49
- GUS and GUSSIE Have Feelings, Too ..... 50
- GUS and GUSSIE Say It With Feeling ..... 51
- GUS and GUSSIE Say, "Thank You" ..... 52
- Moods and Music ..... 53
- How Does This Make You Feel Game ..... 54
- Sometimes I Feel Scared ..... 55
- A "Stuffed" Self-Portrait ..... 56
- Dramatic Play ..... 57
- Happy and Sad Puppets ..... 58
- You Help Me and I Help You ..... 59
- Partners Share a Job ..... 60
- Giant Leaf Box Sculpture ..... 61
- A Descriptive Name Game ..... 62
- The Friendship Wall Hanging ..... 63
- Multicultural Experiences ..... 64

V. **Reinforcement Activities for Special Needs Children** ..... 65
- Learning by Touch ..... 66
- Learning by Smell and Taste ..... 67
- Keeping Our Teeth Clean ..... 68
- Keeping Our Bodies Clean ..... 69
- The Four Food Groups ..... 70
- Feelings ..... 71
- Let's Be Creative! ..... 72
- Our Family ..... 73
- Table Manners ..... 74

## I. About GROWING UP STRONG



## What is GUS?

GROWING UP STRONG (GUS) is a curriculum designed to assist kindergarten and first grade children in developing strong mental health. This program will help create the best possible classroom atmosphere for promoting positive mental health development—the basis for primary prevention of chemical abuse.

## How Did GUS Begin?

Through the cooperative working relationship of the University of Oklahoma Center for Child and Family Development and the Washita Valley Community Action Council Head Start, Judith McGowen Hammer and Angelina Merenda O'Bar conceptualized the beginnings of the GROWING UP STRONG program. The preschool version of GUS is the foundation for this edition, designed for kindergarteners through first graders. What began as a strong need to emphasize mental health development activities for three- to five-year-old children, ended as a preschool mental wellness and chemical abuse prevention program largely created by Susan Bumgarner, who lent her early childhood expertise to the development of the GUS curriculum. Funding support for Preschool GUS came from the Oklahoma State Department of Mental Health Prevention Section for two years of development, testing, and program evaluation.

On August 15, 1986, Preschool GUS was in print and ready for public distribution. The first printing was sold out in only six months and GUS had captured national attention. Currently, Preschool GUS is being used by Head Start programs and preschools in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Canada as well as in education programs for Indian children. After the success of Preschool GUS, CCFD staff, in collaboration with the Moore (Oklahoma) Public Schools (MPS), began field-testing a GUS K-1 curriculum. This testing was funded by a coalition of the Prevention Section of the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health, MPS, and CCFD. An editorial board comprised of teachers, counselors, and parents assisted with the final format of GUS K-1.

## Why GUS?

At the moment of birth we begin developing the behaviors, attitudes, habits, and decisions that will shape our lives. The environments in which we reside and the experiences we undergo all contribute to our mental and physical well-being. As Secretary of Education William J. Bennett summed up the drug problem in *Schools Without Drugs*:

> In America today, the most serious threat to the health and well-being of our children is drug use . . . . Even more troubling is the fact that children are using drugs at younger ages. Students today identify drugs as a major problem among their schoolmates as early as the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. (The percentage of students using drugs by the sixth grade has tripled during the last decade.)

Drug use impairs memory, alertness, and achievement as well as eroding the capacity of students to perform in school, to think, and to act responsibly. The consequences of using drugs can last a lifetime. GROWING UP STRONG CAN ALSO LAST A LIFETIME! Our approach promotes primary prevention initiatives tailored to the specific developmental levels and interests of children in the primary grades. The best way to prevent drug abuse—and a number of other serious problems that can develop in older children—is to help every child develop habits, attitudes, and life skills associated with strong mental health. Such prevention measures are similar to efforts traditionally undertaken, for example, in the areas of nutrition and dental health.

The name of this program, GROWING UP STRONG, was chosen to reflect an image of strength in all aspects of the primary developmental growth years of children. The GUS program includes such concepts as a strong, positive self-image; the ability to take responsibility; the ability to behave in a socially acceptable manner; the ability to express and cope with emotions; and other related life skills.

GUS assists children in positively strengthening their self-images. Mental wellness concepts are complex skills **learned** over many years, and children need frequent opportunities to think about and exercise these mental health skills.

By providing the teacher with numerous activities appropriate to school and classroom settings, the GUS program allows children to practice coping skills. Self-concept is related to academic performance as well as one's ability to resist peer pressure or to set goals.

GUS offers a comprehensive program that focuses on kindergarten, developmental, transitional, and first grade children. More than just "a lesson a day," this program involves the child, the teacher, and families in positive, ongoing activities that contribute to strong mental health development.

GROWING UP STRONG is special because it provides an education and prevention vehicle for families, schools, and communities to positively affect school-age children during the critical years in which self-image develops. The effects of learning at this time in a child's life generally are greater than at any later time. Knowledge and skills related to the prevention of mental health problems must occur early to have the greatest potential effect.

Many of the GUS activities are not new, but are similar to those commonly used by perceptive educators. Growing Up Strong activities have been chosen with the common goal of promoting positive mental health. They are organized in a practical way for achieving that goal. Additionally, attention is given to the attitudes of the teacher who uses these materials. Attitudes are important because **the way we teach** is as important as **what we teach**.

Just as educators provide students with an academic foundation for achieving career goals, so too does the promotion of mental wellness provide children with a base of coping mechanisms.

## An Overview of the GUS Program

Because every child's unique self-concept and other characteristics of mental wellness are so important, bits and pieces of GROWING UP STRONG should find their way into all aspects of the classroom and the child's home. The GUS program has been designed so that it can become an integral part of the total curriculum.

Features of the GUS program include classroom activities, teacher information, strategies for family involvement, GUS and GUSSIE dolls and puppets, resources, and information on evaluation, screening, and assessment.

### Classroom Activities

GUS classroom activities can be used in a variety of formats such as in learning centers, with small groups of children, with individual children, or with the class as a whole. Teachers, counselors, or well-trained volunteers can deliver the curriculum, because GUS activities blend well with other units teachers typically include in their daily lesson plans.

### Teacher Information

Information for teachers includes explanations dealing with classroom management techniques as well as strategies for involving family members in positive interaction between home and school. Efficient classroom management has a beneficial side-effect—a smoothly run classroom.

### Family Involvement

In the pocket of the GROWING UP STRONG program folder, you will find masters that can be copied for use as family involvement handouts which should be sent home with the children. Sending handouts home once each week is a good practice, but the actual number of "take-homes" may be a budget decision. Teachers should prioritize according to their perception of the importance of the information. The **Award-O-Grams, Happy-Day-Feelings Awards**, and **Happygrams** are critical in developing good relations with families at the beginning of the program. Family involvement kits are available.

### Dolls/Puppets

GUS and GUSSIE dolls and puppets have become the hallmark of the GROWING UP STRONG program. One of the first things a teacher will want to do is obtain a set of dolls or puppets. Additionally, GUSSIE and GUS are featured prominently in the literature children will be taking home to their families. The GUS and GUSSIE characters provide a visual framework for ongoing discussions and they become the children's friends and confidantes. The dolls and puppets have their own special place in the classroom and children know that if they just need to talk to someone, GUS and GUSSIE are always ready to listen—they are always accepting, never critical.

### Evaluation, Screening and Assessment

The GUS and GUSSIE Observable Behavior Checklist is an optional evaluation, screening, and assessment tool. The checklist is a nonlabeling, nondiagnostic scale based on observable behaviors.

## II. Using GROWING UP STRONG

## How to Use GROWING UP STRONG

It is probably most convenient to think of the mental wellness concepts in GUS as threads that run through your curriculum, through your classroom management techniques, and through the productive teacher-family-child relationships. The following explanations of how to use the GUS program will assist you in making it as effective as possible. It is important to incorporate all GUS program elements into your overall curriculum.

- Introduce the GUS program to the families of your children at the beginning of the school year. Communicate its purpose and benefits to them in a newsletter article, in a letter, during a parent meeting, at an open house, or use all of these methods.

- Make it a point to establish frequent, positive communication with families as a regular part of your classroom routine. It is very important to **positively communicate** with families as often as possible. For example, Happygrams, Award-O-Grams, and Happy Day Feelings Awards are great positive communication tools.

- Use the GUS family involvement handouts. Activities that actively involve the child can be used more than once. It is often beneficial to repeat activities when the children are a few months older.

- If possible, have a meeting with families that features an important mental wellness topic. Stress management (for children and/or families) and positive guidance techniques that families can use at home are two possible topics. Some good resources for speakers are your local county Health Department Guidance Center, Parents Anonymous groups, and nearby colleges.

- Use your GUS and GUSSIE dolls or puppets from the start. You will find that the children will quickly become attached to these special friends in their classroom. It is important to keep the dolls/puppets in a place that the children respect, but is easily accessible, to ensure their usefulness to the children.

- Blend a GUS mental wellness promotion activity into your regular lesson plan at least **once every day.**

- Select activities both you and the children will enjoy. Repeat the children's favorites as often as feasible. Repetition further instills the concepts introduced earlier.

## Sample Introductory Letter to Families

When you begin using the GROWING UP STRONG program, you may wish to adapt this letter to use in telling the children's families about GUS.

(Date)

Dear (Family):

**ATHLETES KNOW IT.**
**COACHES KNOW IT.**
**MENTAL STRENGTH CAN HELP WIN THE GAME.**

Being mentally prepared for a certain role and developing self-confidence through practice and proper guidance is what we want to talk about. We want our children to grow up mentally strong so they can cope with whatever situations they will encounter as children and as adults.

GROWING UP STRONG (GUS) for kindergarten through first grade is a special program designed to emphasize mental wellness and prevention of chemical abuse within the overall educational program at the _____ Elementary School. By giving children guidance and practice in such areas as taking responsibility, expressing emotions, learning how to cope, becoming assertive, and other related life coping skills, that mental wellness will be enhanced. Strong mental health gives children the start they need to withstand pressures to abuse drugs and alcohol later in life. Our goal is growth in mental strength to match the physical, scholastic, and artistic growth we expect in young children.

GROWING UP STRONG also is based on the idea that the child's behavior is closely related to the child's self-image. GUS helps children, teachers, and families feel good about themselves.

You will be hearing more about GUS K-1 as the program progresses. Your opinions will be valuable to us. Please let us know what you think. Together we can give our children the mental strength they need to win in life.

Sincerely,

_____, Principal
_____ Elementary School

## Using the GUS and GUSSIE Observable Behavior Checklist

The GUS and GUSSIE Observable Behavior Checklist was developed for use during the piloting and testing stages of the Preschool GROWING UP STRONG program but it is also valuable for kindergarten through first grade children. It is a fully validated scale (prima facie, concurrent and experimental in design) that can be used for a classroom or small groups of children as well as to track individual progress.

Completing the assessment takes between five and ten minutes per child. Give yourself ample time (approximately one month) to become acquainted with the children before you begin using the instrument. Although the checklist is not a diagnostic tool, you may find it useful in looking objectively at the behavior of individual children or all the children as a group at timed intervals.

By formulating a "picture" of an individual child, or a composite assessment of your class, the behavioral checklist will enhance your development of primary prevention strategies and help you select and plan lessons or activities for your class. (Your school district may choose to purchase technical assistance from the Center for Child and Family Development for tabulating and interpreting your assessment data.)

Please note that checklist items 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 26, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, and 35 reflect "negative" behaviors that are normal at certain times for most children. One must not assume that a child is abnormal in any way on the basis of using this checklist. This assessment instrument should assist teachers in realistically viewing children's "typical" patterns of behavior. For example, an extreme number of "never" or "most/all of the time" behaviors may indicate further investigation, more interaction with the child, professional intervention, or referral.

Guidance counselors and teachers with a research methods background may draw their own comparisons by plotting the children's scores according to the scales listed on page 15.

### Pre-Test Assessment

Administer the checklist approximately two months after the beginning of the school year (pre-test) and again during the last month of the school year (post-test). Need for improvement in children's self-esteem and coping skills can be interpreted from a high score in one of the three lowest categories which describe less frequent or non-occurring behavioral situations.

Items can be grouped into five scales according to statistical and conceptual similarities. Scale scores can then be aggregated for each classroom in order to assess the percentages of children in each class showing need for improvement. Greatest need for improvement in behaviors reflective of self-esteem and coping skills may occur for Scales 1, 2, and 3.

### Post-Test Improvements

The greatest improvements in observed desirable behavior usually occur for those checklist items making up Scale 2 and Scale 3. Scale 2 includes behavior involving verbal expression, self-confidence expressed in constructive behavior, and reasoning ability in intellectual problem-solving situations. Scale 3 involves anger-coping situations which also contain elements of self-confidence and constructive expression. Scales 4 and 5 might prove significant with larger or more poorly adjusted groups of children.

For purposes of confidentiality, you might want to assign numbers to children rather than use their names. The "key" to the numbers could remain locked in a file cabinet. Adult family members can make observations of children when there are conflicting opinions about a child's behavior. Sometimes parents and teachers observe the same behaviors, but refer to them by different names.

**Question 15 has cultural relevance. Teachers should be sensitive to the ethnic background of each child. Omit this and any other question which is contrary to a child's cultural experience.**

School: _____

Grade: _____ ID#: _____

Child's Name: _____ Sex: _____

Child's Birthdate: _____

Checklist completed by: _____

Teacher's ID#: _____

Checklist completed on: (date) _____

Other information: _____

_____

Answer every question. Select the *best* answer you can. If you have not actually *seen* something happen, select "never."

# GUS and GUSSIE
## Observable Behavior Checklist

| | NEVER (you have never seen this happen) | SELDOM (once or twice in the past month) | SOMETIMES (three to four times per month) | OFTEN (one to four times per week) | MOST/ALL OF THE TIME (at least once a day) | Notes or Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Eager to try new things. | | | | | | |
| 2. Prefers to play alone most of the day. | | | | | | |
| 3. Plays different adult roles in dramatic play (pretends to be nurse, daddy, etc.). | | | | | | |
| 4. Eager to make decisions and to do things for himself or herself. | | | | | | |
| 5. Damages or abandons classroom materials rather than properly using, caring for, and storing them. | | | | | | |
| 6. Is willing to bargain or compromise in order to attain goals. | | | | | | |
| 7. Must be coaxed or told by adult to begin before entering into an activity. | | | | | | |
| 8. Refuses to participate in large muscle activity (such as running, climbing, etc). | | | | | | |
| 9. Adjusts rapidly to changes in routines or people. | | | | | | |
| 10. Stays actively involved in a chosen task until it is completed or for at least 15 minutes. | | | | | | |
| 11. Speech unclear to strangers. | | | | | | |
| 12. Uses words to express feelings, both positive and negative (such as, "You make me mad," or "I like you," etc.). | | | | | | |
| 13. Verbally participates in group time (sings songs with group, volunteers to answer questions, takes part in discussions, etc.). | | | | | | |
| 14. Expresses liking for children or adults. | | | | | | |
| 15. Avoids eye contact when speaking or being spoken to. | | | | | | |
| 16. Confident, stands up for own rights when challenged. | | | | | | |
| 17. Can get and maintain adult attention without "getting into trouble" to do so. | | | | | | |
| 18. Spends more time with adults than with own age group. | | | | | | |

Child's Name: _____

| | NEVER | SELDOM (you have never seen this happen) | SOMETIMES (once or twice in the past month) | OFTEN (three to four times per month) | MOST ALL OF THE TIME (one to four times per week / at least once a day) | Notes or Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19. Enters into class activity within 10 minutes after arrival at classroom. | | | | | | |
| 20. Talks to adult directly (rather than sulking or acting out) when adult has caused child to feel angry. | | | | | | |
| 21. Shows concern for other people with words or actions. | | | | | | |
| 22. Gets into fights or quarrels with other children. | | | | | | |
| 23. Shows anger in a way that does not damage people or equipment. | | | | | | |
| 24. Seeks a child to play with or plays with another child when that child offers to play. | | | | | | |
| 25. Shares when he or she has at least enough for self. | | | | | | |
| 26. Cries for no apparent reason. | | | | | | |
| 27. Has temper outbursts and unpredictable behavior. | | | | | | |
| 28. Mood changes quickly and drastically. | | | | | | |
| 29. Takes responsibility for own actions, such as staying within the rules in an activity or in the classroom. | | | | | | |
| 30. Wets pants or has bowel movement accidents during the day. | | | | | | |
| 31. Shows pride in accomplishments or creations. | | | | | | |
| 32. Complains of stomachache, headache, arm or leg pains. | | | | | | |
| 33. Leaves (or attempts to leave) table in middle of snack or meal. | | | | | | |
| 34. Says, "I can do that!" (or makes similar statements showing self-confidence). | | | | | | |
| 35. Bumps into things and gets hurt. | | | | | | |
| 36. Offers suggestions for solving problems. | | | | | | |
| 37. Takes criticisms and reprimands in stride, without becoming upset. | | | | | | |

38. Has this child been diagnosed as having a learning disability, a physical handicap, and or other special need? ☐ no ☐ yes

If yes, please explain briefly:

The GUS and GUSSIE Observable Behavior Checklist falls on five factors using Rotational Factor Analysis. Listed below are the questions that fall on each of the five scales.

**SCALE 1**

| No. | Checklist Item |
|---|---|
| 1 | Eager to try new things |
| 3 | Plays different adult roles in dramatic play |
| 4 | Eager to make decisions and do things for him or herself |
| 7 | Must be coaxed or told by an adult to begin an activity |
| 9 | Adjusts rapidly to changes in routines or people |
| 13 | Verbally participates in group time |
| 19 | Enters into class activity within 10 minutes after arrival at classroom |
| 24 | Seeks a child to play with or plays with another child when sought |
| 31 | Shows pride in accomplishments or creations |

**SCALE 2**

| | |
|---|---|
| 6 | Is willing to bargain or compromise in order to attain goals |
| 12 | Uses words to express feelings, both positive and negative |
| 14 | Expresses liking for children or adults |
| 16 | Is confident, stands up for own rights when challenged |
| 21 | Shows concern for other people with words or actions |
| 34 | Says "I can do that!" (or similar statement showing self-confidence) |
| 36 | Offers suggestions for solving problems |

**SCALE 3**

| | |
|---|---|
| 20 | Talks to adult directly when adult has caused child to feel angry |
| 23 | Shows anger in a way that does not damage people or equipment |
| 37 | Takes criticisms and reprimands in stride, without becoming upset |

**SCALE 4**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | Prefers to work/play alone most of the day |
| 8 | Refuses to participate in large muscle activity |
| 18 | Spends more time with adults that with own age group |
| 26 | Cries for no apparent reason |
| 32 | Complains of stomach-ache, headache, arm or leg pains |
| 33 | Leaves table in middle of snack or meal |
| 35 | Bumps into things and gets hurt |

**SCALE 5**

| | |
|---|---|
| 5 | Damages or abandons classroom materials rather than caring for them properly |
| 10 | Stays actively involved in a chosen task until completed or for 15 minutes |
| 17 | Can get and maintain adult attention without "getting into trouble" |
| 22 | Gets into fights or quarrels with other children |
| 25 | Shares when he or she has at least enough for self |
| 27 | Has temper outbursts and unpredictable behavior |
| 28 | Mood changes quickly and drastically |
| 29 | Takes responsibility for own actions |

**NON-SCALING ITEMS**

| | |
|---|---|
| 11 | Speech is unclear to strangers |
| 15 | Avoids eye contact when speaking or being spoken to |
| 30 | Wets pants or has bowel movement accidents during the day |

## Making the GUS and GUSSIE Dolls and Puppets

Because GUSSIE and GUS are such important parts of the GROWING UP STRONG program, we encourage you to arrange to have them made right away!

### Making GUS and GUSSIE Dolls

Teachers, families, or community volunteers may make dolls which look like the GUS and GUSSIE characters. Any soft-sculpture doll pattern will do. These patterns usually call for knit fabrics. Most major pattern companies have soft-sculpture doll patterns. Many craft magazines also have directions for making dolls which would be appropriate. The Center for Child and Family Development has a custom pattern for dolls which has been used to make hundreds of sturdy, attractive GUS and GUSSIE dolls. Contact the Center for Child and Family Development at 555 Constitution Avenue, Norman, Oklahoma 73037; or phone (405) 325-1446 for help with patterns or to purchase dolls.

After looking at the various drawings of GUSSIE and GUS, you will realize you need to select a pattern having a wide face. Also, keep in mind that the dolls should be large enough to really hug (probably between 1½ feet to 2½ feet tall). The dolls should be soft and cuddly. Their hair should seem "real" so you will need to use fake fur or yarn. When dressing the dolls, active wear is preferred. You might want to stay away from little suits for GUS and frilly dresses for GUSSIE. Knits are best. If your dolls are about two feet tall, they can probably wear real children's clothing in sizes 12 months to 18 months.

The "trademark" for the dolls is their terry cloth headbands. Each doll should always wear a headband with his or her name clearly printed on it, as shown in the illustrations. Acrylic paint, fabric paint, markers, or embroidery all work well.

### Making GUS and GUSSIE Puppets

Patterns for making GUSSIE and GUS hand puppets are printed on the following pages.

**Method 1:**

Use an iron-on transfer crayon or pencil according to directions and transfer the pattern to a light colored or white fabric. The cutting lines (_____), seam lines (_ _ _ _ _), notches, and places to clip have been marked. After transferring to fabric, cut out the puppet pieces. Match right sides together and sew along the seam line. Clip, pink, or zigzag seams to finish. Turn and press.

**Method 2:**

Tape pattern to a window. Tape white fabric on top of the pattern. If the sun is brightly shining, you can see to trace the pattern onto the fabric. Use paints, iron-on crayons, or other marking tools to apply the design to the fabric. Complete as described in Method 1 above. It may be helpful to place the fabric in an embroidery hoop to keep it smooth.

**Method 3:**

Mark the fabric using any of the methods described above. Use hand or machine embroidery to decorate the puppet. Sew as previously described.

**IT WILL BE AN EXCITING TIME WHEN THE GUS AND GUSSIE DOLLS OR PUPPETS COME TO YOUR CLASSROOM!**

## GUS puppet front

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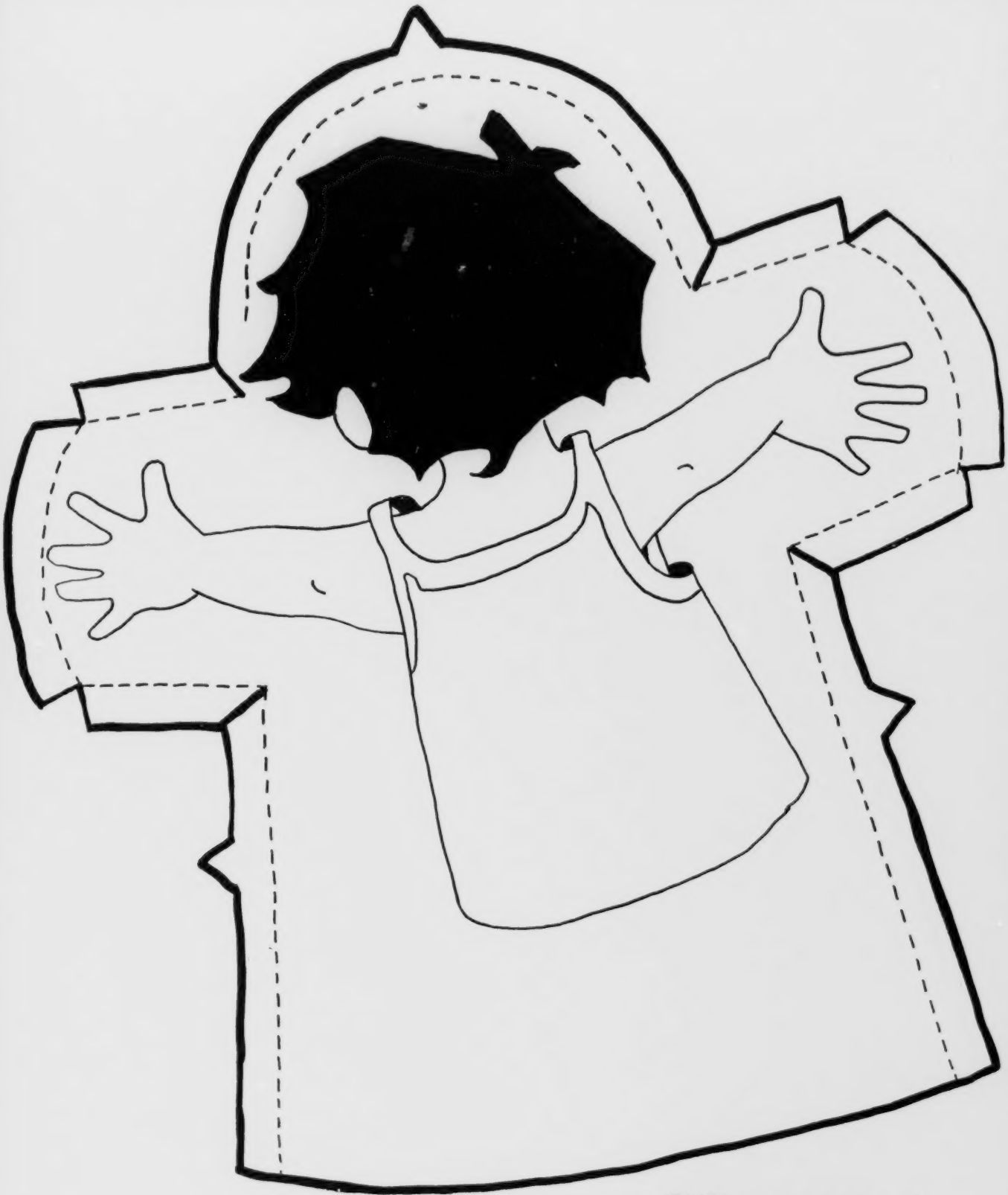

## GUS puppet back

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## GUSSIE puppet front

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## GUSSIE puppet back

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## How To Use the GUS and GUSSIE Dolls and Puppets

The activity on the following page, "GUS and GUSSIE Come to Class," provides an option for introducing the characters to the children. The message from GUS and GUSSIE below also can be helpful as you carry out this introductory activity.

Always display the GUS and GUSSIE puppets on a stand. To make a stand, simply attach two small plastic detergent bottles (or something similar) to a board. Each of the puppets will fit over one of the bottles, so the children can use them when appropriate.

Use the puppets at times when you discuss feelings or sensitive subjects with the children in a group. Put on the GUS and GUSSIE puppets and let them speak the words. Let them play the teacher's role. As the children become acquainted with the characters, they will find them easy to talk to during this kind of group discussion.

**A Note from GUS and GUSSIE:**

Hi! I am GUS. And I am GUSSIE. We are your new friends and we have come to stay in the classroom.

Why are we here? We are here to listen to what each of you has to say. Guess what? You can tell us your feelings. You can tell us your thoughts. You can even tell us your problems. You can also tell us about the things that make you happy. We understand what it is like to have a bad day—to feel grumpy, to be scared, to be angry with someone, or to be excited. Just talking to us will make you feel better. We want you to know that we really like to listen to you!

Besides listening, we both like to hug and play. So we hope that you will give us a special place in the classroom where we can live. This will help us do our very best job as your new friends.

Where should our home in the classroom be? It needs to be a special place where it is fairly quiet—so we can hear you when you talk to us. It needs to be a place where we can see everything that is going on in the classroom. But most important of all, it needs to be a place where you can find us when you need us for talking, for hugging, or for playing.

Maybe the language area in the classroom would be a good place for us. The language area is probably quiet enough that we can sit, chat, and listen to our friends. Maybe we can have a special chair or a special shelf on the wall where we can sit and be almost as tall as all of you. We have a special job to do. Can any of you think of a good place in your classroom where we can live?

There is one more thing we should tell you. The most important thing that we need from you is love. We promise to give you love, because we will always be here for you to talk to and we will always listen to what you have to say to us. You can give us the love we need by talking to us. You can give us the love we need by including us in some of your activities. Our favorite way to be loved is for you to give us lots of hugs! Both of us **love** to get hugs!!

## GUS and GUSSIE Come to Class

### Curriculum Areas

Language arts
Expressing feelings

### Goals/Objectives

To introduce children to the GUS and GUSSIE dolls/puppets and to their place in the classroom.

To provide information to the children on how to use the dolls/puppets.

To allow each child to express his or her feelings about the dolls/puppets and/or the class.

### When to Use

Group time

### What You Need

- GUS and GUSSIE dolls/puppets
- The "How To Use the GUS and GUSSIE Dolls and Puppets" page in this Teacher's Guide.

### Procedure

1. Have the children sit in a circle on the floor. You sit in the circle, too, with the GUS and GUSSIE dolls in your lap.
2. Tell the children about the dolls. You may want to read them the "Note from GUS and GUSSIE" on page 21. In telling the children about the dolls/puppets, be sure to include the following points:
   - They are special new friends in our classroom.
   - They will always be ready to listen to us, and they will keep our secrets.
   - They can help us feel better when we have a hard day. (Later, you may need to remind a child that she or he can use GUS or GUSSIE if you notice the child is having a tough time in class that day. However, avoid making a child use the dolls or puppets.)
   - There is a special place in our room where GUS and GUSSIE will live. (Show the children this place if you have already chosen it. Or, you can have the children select a place where GUS and GUSSIE will live.)
3. Have the children tell GUS and GUSSIE individually something about the class, about themselves, or about the classroom. Explain to them that, after all, GUS and GUSSIE are the "new kids on the block."

   **For example:** "GUS and GUSSIE have never been here before, and it is probably very exciting for them to see all these new faces and to be in a new place. Let's tell them what our class is like and what they can expect in our class."
4. When the dolls have been thoroughly initiated, you be the first one to give the dolls a welcoming hug. Then, pass the dolls around the circle so each child can also give them a welcoming hug. If a child does not want to talk to the dolls or hug them, don't press him to do so.
5. When this session is over, make a point of taking GUS and GUSSIE to the place in the classroom that will be their "home."

**Note:** If you do not have the GUS and GUSSIE dolls made yet, introduce the puppets first. Obviously you can not give the puppets a hug! However, you can touch them lovingly and say something special to them. Then, each child can put a puppet on her hand and do the same.

## III. GUS and GUSSIE Talk With Teachers

## Classroom Management Tips

### Rules of the Classroom

Although rules are not always the best way to handle classroom problems, they are necessary. Here are some guidelines for making rules that could work in your classroom.

Rules should be simple, short, and sensible to children. Teachers cannot assume that children understand a rule or always remember to use it just because they have memorized it. Anybody who has ever run a stop sign by accident or gone in an "out" door by mistake will realize that we all, at times, forget rules that we know. The difference is that children will do this more often than adults. They don't have our years of experience and practice. In addition, they frequently are involved intensely in whatever it is they are doing (or thinking) and forget about the rules.

Sometimes it helps if the children assist in making the classroom rules. Rules could be discussed with them at group time.

> **For example:** "We have a problem in our block area lately. People keep running through and knocking the blocks over. How might we solve this problem?"

Encourage the children to think of possible solutions to help them through a problem-solving process—brainstorming, discussion, voting, or consensus. Suggest that the class have a trial period in order to give the new rule (or idea) time to work. Then they can meet again either to congratulate themselves for solving the problem or to decide on another approach.

If an individual child is having trouble with a particular rule, the child may be able to help you solve the problem of how to help him or her if you ask some questions. The child's solution may involve your help. For example, the child may want you to say a code word if you see him or her attempt to hit another child. The child may ask you to just stand by him or her at certain times. The most important point to be made here is that when the **child** decides how you will help, it is much more likely to work than when **you** decide.

### Enforce Limits

Try never to make exceptions. Children need the security of consistency. As much as is appropriate, have all the rules apply to all the children all the time. Be patient. Anger will only make the situation worse.

### Socially Acceptable Behavior

When the rules that the children helped to create for the classroom are broken, then you may want to have a classroom discussion to decide what needs to be done. Guide the children to several solutions to the problem. Explain that since all the children helped to make the rules, then in some situations, they can all help to decide the solution. You may be surprised how fair the solutions will be. They think about the fact that they may break a rule sometimes also.

### Teach the Task

Young children need to be taught how to use a space, return an item to the shelf, turn a page of a book, and so forth.

At the beginning of the school year, practice targeted activities often. Teach children "how" to use the classroom. Walk through an activity with them so they feel secure with the structure of the room.

> **For example:** If you use learning centers, take small groups at a time and do an activity to show the children how to use the materials.

If your school uses a cafeteria, practice with the children how to go through the line and how to take the tray to the table.

When you go outside, teach the children the rules of the playground.

The activity on the following page offers a suggestion for teaching a task.

## Teaching a Task

**Curriculum Areas**

Fostering independence

**Goals/Objectives**

To enable children to function as independently as possible, and to take responsibility for the care of the classroom.

**When to Use**

Anytime early in the school year

**What You Need**

- Laminating film
- Heavy paper
- Sample manipulatives
- Tape or plastic-tak

**Procedure**

1. At each learning center in your classroom, remove all the items off the low shelves. Draw or trace the container and a sample of what is in the container.
2. Cover the label with laminating film or contact paper on both sides and secure to the shelf with plastic-tak or tape.
3. Complete each learning center this way.
4. Teach the children to "read" the labels so they can return items to the shelves correctly.
5. Watch your clean-up time move ever so smoothly!

**Note:** Involve the children in making the labels. They can trace, draw, or glue a sample to the containers. First grade teachers can have their children write the names on the labels.

## Positive Comments

Find at least one positive thing to say to every child during the day. As you do this, remember that your comments must be sincere.

In considering what you might comment on, it is most productive if you comment on something the child is doing or has done (rather than on how he looks or what he is wearing). Your comment can be as simple as the remark, "Johnny, I like the way you're doing that!"

As you make positive comments to the children, try to make your language as descriptive as possible. Some examples of descriptive comments:

*"Jane, thank you for helping me pour the juice. You almost never spill any because you are so careful."*

*"John, I like the way you take your time so you can turn in a neat paper."*

For some children, on some days, it can be extremely difficult for the teacher to find a positive action to mention. However, you need to find **something** to comment on that the child has done well or at least has done better than in the past. Some examples:

*"Jenny, I see you drank all your milk today. That will help you grow strong."*

*"Jamie, you put away all your things in your cubby all by yourself. Thank you for helping."*

The child about whom it is most difficult to make a positive comment is the child who needs a positive comment the most!

It is a good idea also to pass on the same positive comments to the children's parents if you talk to them that day.

## Happy-Day-Feelings Awards

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Language development
Emotional development/expressing feelings

### Goals/Objectives

To share "happy" feelings with family members.

To reinforce children's names.

To give special attention to children for something positive that occurred during the day. To describe a "happy" feeling.

### When to Use

Frequently

### What You Need

- Pen, pencil, or marker
- Pins or tape (safety pins are best)
- Copy machine
- Paper

### Procedure

1. Photocopy the awards. Make at least one page of awards per child. Cut out the awards and store them in a handy container in your classroom with pins or tape and a writing instrument.
2. When children accomplish something after working hard or having a very good time, write the child's name on an award and attach it prominently to the child's clothing. Allow the child to leave it on all day and wear it home.
3. Talk with the child when you present the award. "I noticed you are having a really good time in the housekeeping area today." "You have become very good at buttoning your coat." "That must make you feel very happy." Be sure to mention the child's feelings. If you can, it is best to get the children to describe their own feelings. Be sure that everyone gets at least one award.
4. After you have used the awards a few times, let the children tell YOU when they need an award. They can tell you why they are feeling happy and you can supply the award. Children who can write their own names may do so if they wish. Don't worry if it isn't legible.

**Note:** Children who have trouble experiencing a happy day are in the greatest need for an award. Try to find a happy (or at least comparatively happy) time during the day and give an award. Consider any day with a happy time in it an opportunity to give an award.

Award

had a happy day.

Ask about it!

Happy-Day-Feelings

Award

had a happy day.

Ask about it!

Happy-Day-Feelings

Award

had a happy day.

Ask about it!

Happy-Day-Feelings

Award

had a happy day.

Ask about it!

Happy-Day-Feelings

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## Award-O-Grams

### Curriculum Areas

Language development

### Goals/Objectives

To enhance the child's self-concept by emphasizing a victory and providing a vehicle by which it may be shared with the family.

To experience writing and reading aloud an accomplished goal.

### When to Use

When children have been working hard on a difficult task and have accomplished their goals. For some children this may be a short-term goal, for others something which they have been working on for a long time.

### What You Need

- Award-O-Gram forms
- Pen or marker

### Procedure

1. Introduce the Award-O-Gram to children who have trouble accomplishing some goal. Read it to the children and suggest how it might be completed. If the children want to take an Award-O-Gram home, assist them in completing the form. Write the child's name on the first line. On the second line, write the tasks the child has successfully completed. Write just what each child says. Read it back to the child, date and sign the form. Congratulate the children and present the Award-O-Grams to them.
2. Award-O-Grams may be used for any tasks the children have successfully completed. Allow the children to determine whether or not they were successful, and have them explain their success. Once you have offered them to several children in the classroom, other children will notice and ask for one. Explain the use of the Award-O-Grams, asking them to share their accomplishments with you to receive an Award-O-Gram often! You will need a plentiful supply. If photocopying becomes a problem, only present Award-O-Grams once every few weeks, but be sure each child takes at least one Award-O-Gram home. If children want many Award-O-Grams in one day, encourage them to choose only one special accomplishment—a task or skill which was challenging for them.

**Note:** Awards and certificates for behavior or academic accomplishments, such as Award-O-Grams, are important because they draw attention to the child's progress and encourage others to compliment the child. When you talk to the children's families, share with them how important you think it is for children to see their awards displayed at home. Use these award forms as often as you can.

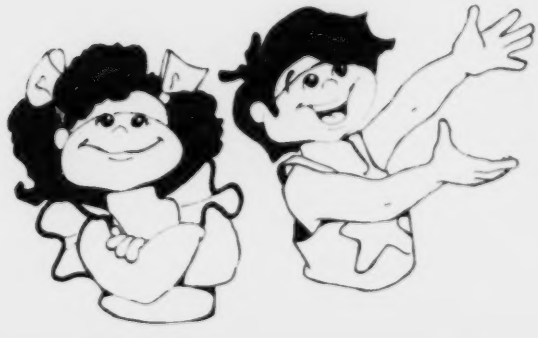
# Award -O- Gram

**This special award is proudly presented to**

_____

**for** _____

**signed** _____ **date** _____



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## Happygrams

### Curriculum Areas

Language development

### Goals/Objectives

To enhance a child's self-concept by emphasizing a victory and providing a vehicle by which it may be shared with the family.

To experience writing and reading aloud an accomplished goal.

### When to Use

When children have been working hard on a difficult task and have accomplished their goals. For some children this may be a short-term goal, for others something which they have been working on for a long time.

### What You Need

- Happygram forms
- Pen or marker

### Procedure

1. Introduce the Happygram to children who have trouble accomplishing some goal. Read it to them and suggest how it might be completed. If children want to take one home, assist them in completing the form. Write the child's name on the first line. On the second line, write the tasks she has successfully completed. Write just what each child says. Read it back to the child, date and sign the form. Congratulate the children and present the Happygrams to them.
2. Happygrams may be used for any task the children have successfully completed. Allow the children to determine whether or not they were successful, and have them explain their success. Once you have offered them to several children in the classroom, the others will notice and ask for one. Explain the use of the Happygrams, asking them to share their accomplishments with you to receive a Happygram. You will need a plentiful supply. Use them often! If photocopying becomes a problem, only present Happygrams once every few weeks. Be sure each child takes at least one Happygram home. If children want many Happygrams in one day, encourage them to choose only one special accomplishment—a task or skill which was challenging for them.

**Note:** Awards and certificates for behavior or academic accomplishments such as Happygrams are important because they draw attention to the child's progress and encourage others to compliment the child. When you talk to the children's families, share with them how important you think it is for children to see their Happygrams displayed at home. Use these Happygram forms as often as you can.

# happygram

**I am happy to announce that**

_____

**has learned to**

_____

**AND WE ARE PROUD!**

_____
**date**

_____
**signed**



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## Letter from the Teacher

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Language development
Name recognition

### Goals/Objectives

To encourage children to talk about feelings and experiences.

To enhance parent-child communication.

To enhance a child's self-image.

To promote positive behaviors.

### When to Use

Frequently! Especially good when a child exhibits a behavior you have been trying to encourage or a child has had a hard day.

### What You Need

- Copy machine
- GUSSIE and GUS stationery
- Pen or pencil

### Procedure

1. Observe the child as usual during the day.
2. Note when the child exhibits a behavior which shows independence, decision-making, responsibility, or other aspects of developmental growth.
3. Put the child's name on the top blank and fill out the second blank according to what you observed. Sign and date the letter.
4. Have the children put their letters in their cubbies and help them remember to take them home.

**Reinforcement:**

- Sign the letter "GUS and GUSSIE"
- Put the letter in an envelope with the child's name on it.
- Mail the letter as a surprise. (This is expensive, but well worth it!)
- Use the GUS and GUSSIE stationery to write your own letter.

**Note:** If you do this at school, be sure all the children get a letter, but not necessarily on the same day.

Dear _____
I just want to let you know how proud I am of you. You are working so hard in school and have helped me many times. I'm especially happy because you _____

_____

Fondly,



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## IV. GUS and GUSSIE Curriculum

## Introduction

GROWING UP STRONG materials should be adapted to your teaching style and classroom needs. The curriculum can be used in any order you choose and you may prefer to use parts of concepts rather than the whole.

Before you send home any family involvement handouts, perhaps sending a letter to parents introducing them to the GUS program would encourage greater family participation. A sample letter is provided for you. You should select the handouts you want to share with parents and decide the times you want to distribute them. Only **you** know what would be appropriate for the parents of your students.

## "Me" Book: Covers and Plans

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Families and family life

### Goals/Objectives

To enhance children's sense of self.
To help children understand their place in their families.
To help children understand their family differences.

### When to Use

This is an excellent activity for the beginning of the year and a good way to introduce language experience charts.

### What You Need

- Unlined paper for pages
- Heavy paper for covers
- Magazines to cut pictures from (optional)
- Markers and/or crayons
- Paint
- Glue or paste
- Scissors
- Hole punch, brads, stapler, or sewing materials for binding
- Camera/film (optional)
- Stencils for capital and lower case letters

### Procedure

1. Each child will make a "Me" Book (at least 12" X 12") over the course of a week or so. During the time children are involved in working on this project, their inserts should be stored until the books are ready to be assembled.
2. Each page of the "Me" Book should be thought of as a separate activity. Children should make one or two pages a day for five or six days. Although you may have certain designated pages in mind, do not require children to complete a particular page if they do not wish to do so. Children wishing to insert additional materials, such as art done that week, should be encouraged to do so.
3. The final activities are making the covers and binding the books. Have the children use the stencils to trace the letters of their names, cut them out and paste them on the covers of the books. Then, the children may decorate their covers as desired. You may wish to attach photographs of the children to the covers. They could bring photos from home.
4. Bind the books using brads, staples, or stitching. Allow the children to help.

"ME" BOOKS are intended to help boost children's self-images. Therefore, the books should be truly an individualized product. Try to encourage the children to design their own covers and pages. This activity should appeal to children's creativity.

## "Me" Book: Some of My Friends

### Curriculum Areas

Peer relationships
Self-concept

### When to Use

In small groups or centers

### Goals/Objectives

To help children learn what makes friendships. To provide opportunities to use language and art to express emotions. Each child will, in some way, say what a friend is, either by describing a friend or by drawing a friend.

### What You Need

- One "Me" Book page per child
- Large pencil
- Markers paint crayons

### Procedure

1. Use a story such as *Will I Have a Friend* by Miriam Cohen to introduce the idea of friends. Have the children tell what a friend is.
2. On top of the page write: Some of My Friends By (have the children write their names). First grade children should be able to trace these words dotted out.
3. Ask the children to paint a picture of some of their friends. Children who draw rather large pictures may need more than one sheet of paper to complete this activity.
4. After the pictures dry, have the children dictate a story about their friends.
5. Add this page to the children's "Me" Books.

**Note**: Unless carefully handled, this activity may turn into a popularity contest. By working with children individually (or, if several children are doing the activity at one time—having them in different locations, such as spread out at a big table or on carpet squares), you will be much less likely to have this problem. If you lack confidence in avoiding problems, consider **not** doing this activity. It could **hurt** rather than **help** self-concept.

## "Me" Book: Food I Like

### Curriculum Areas

Nutrition
Self-concept
Similarities and differences

### Goals/Objectives

To enhance children's awareness of what they eat and like to eat.

To provide children with practice in decision-making. Children will show on paper (through collage, drawings, and/or dictation) at least four of their favorite foods.

### When to Use

As a follow-up to a nutrition lesson.
In a small group.
As an optional independent activity.

### What You Need

- One or more blank "Me" Book pages for each child
- Marker (teacher use)
- Markers (for children)
- Paste or glue
- Scissors
- Magazine and or newspaper pictures of a variety of foods

### Procedure

1. Have a prepared "Me" Book page ready for each child upon arrival to small group. The page should be titled "Foods I Like." Ask the children to talk about their favorite foods. Write the names and draw a picture of the food on a large sheet of paper. Try to list at least four foods for every child.
2. Set out materials, including magazines and some pre-cut materials.
3. When the small group is ready, review the food names listed on their particular chart. Help the children find their own favorite food. Glue them to the "Me" Book pages. Help the children write the food names below each picture. Allow the children to use an additional page, if necessary, in order to use all their pictures.
4. As the children work on this activity, encourage them to talk about their favorite foods. How do they taste? What is it that they like about them? Are their favorite foods the same as or different than the favorite foods of other children?
5. A variation on this activity would be to divide the blank page into the four major food groups. Have the children choose one or more of their favorites in each food group. This will not work unless the children are quite familiar with the four food groups.
6. Add this page (or pages) to the children's "Me" Books.

**Reinforcement:** As a follow-up, have a center prepared with cans, boxes, etc. of foods so the children can play pretend grocery store. Also, the children could create graphs of similar likes and dislikes. Grocery ads are great for children who are readers. They lead to great projects. Again, ask the children's parents for help collecting these items.

**Note:** Accept whatever foods the children like—whether or not you like them, and whether or not they are nutritious.

## "Me" Book: More Ideas

### Curriculum Areas

Language development
Self-concept
Social development
Families and family life

### Goals/Objectives

To help children become more aware of their families as well as the families of their peers.

To help children understand that family members who live together help each other and form personal relationships.

### When to Use

In a small group.
As a directed learning activity.
In the art area during self-selection time.

### What You Need

- Blank "Me" Book pages
- Crayons
- Markers
- Water color paints

### Procedure

1. Label a page for the children with a particular topic. Some suggested topics include:
   "How We Have Fun at Home" "How We Work Together"
   "How We Help Each Other" "How We Sometimes Argue"
2. Encourage the children to think about how this aspect of daily living applies to their lives.
3. Write down what the children say on their pages. Use their exact words.
4. Have the children illustrate the page to match the topic.
5. Make certain each child's name is on his page.
6. Add the page to the child's "Me" Book.
7. On another page, have the children draw a picture of their families. Since it was suggested that the "Me" Book could be used early in the school year, the teacher might dot out the names of each child's family members and have the child trace the names.
8. The "Me" Book activity is an excellent discussion stimulator. At group time, read a couple of "Me" Book pages from the children's books if they give permission to have them read. You could use this as the basis for discussions about feelings.

**Reinforcement:** As a follow-up to these activities, set up the easel to allow the children to paint pictures of their families. The teacher could ask the children to bring photographs of family members which could lead to a discussion of family portraits. Each child could also create a family portrait using collage materials.

**Note:** You could invent some "Me" Book pages for GUS and GUSSIE to read to the children.

## Experience Charts

### Curriculum Areas

Language development
Self-concept

### Goals/Objectives

To help children feel that their words are important.

### When to Use

During group time.
As a directed activity.

### What You Need

- 11" × 17" paper, lined or unlined
- Felt-tip marker

### Procedure

1. Preselect a "question for the day" and write the question at the top of a sheet of large paper.

   **General Topics:**

   - plants
   - foods
   - feelings
   - kites
   - colors
   - circus
   - leaves
   - trucks
   - dinosaurs
   - birds
   - trees
   - trains
   - hospitals
   - painting
   - insects
   - houses
   - shapes
   - paintings
   - another country
   - zoo animals
   - farm animals
   - outer space
   - cooking
   - holidays
   - woodworking
   - coloring
   - community helpers

   **Sample Questions:**

   The best type of questions begin like the following:
   - "Tell me something about . . ."
   - "Tell me about your . . ."
   - "Tell me one thing you saw . . ."
   - "What happened when you . . ."
   - "Why did you feel . . ."

2. Ask each child in the class (one at a time) the question and record his or her responses as accurately as possible. As you take this dictation, do not correct grammar or pronunciation; rather, write down the child's statement exactly as the child says it. Put the children's names beside their statements.
3. Display the finished chart at children's eye level where all can see it. The children may ask you or another adult to read it to them.
4. If children refuse to dictate or cannot think of anything to say, give them another chance later on; however, do not insist upon a response. Keeping your questions specific will tend to help children with this exercise.

**Reinforcement:** As a child develops the skills of reading and writing, the experience charts that are created can be copied and then illustrated. Use only one or two descriptive sentences on the charts.

Kindergarten and developmental teachers may start the year by using "rebus" experience charts. Rebus charts have sentences that combine pictures and words.

**Example:** My is in the

**Note:** Topics for experience charts can be anything. In general, you will have your best results when you ask about something the children have been thinking about—a unit topic, a field trip taken recently, the child's own family, a character in a story read in class that day, and so on. You may choose to type up a number of these charts after they have been taken down. You can bind them into a class book which children may take turns taking home to show parents.

## "Body Parts" Experience Chart

### Curriculum Areas

Body parts
Self-concept
Linear measurement

### Goals/Objectives

To facilitate positive self-concept development.
To compare length of footprints.

### When to Use

In large group or centers

### What You Need

- Large paper (with pre-drawn body outline)
- A body puzzle which would fit the form on the paper
- Markers
- Plaster of Paris
- Paint
- Rulers (optional)

### Procedure

1. In a large group, have the children sing "Put Your Finger in the Air" or Tom Glazer's "Eye Winker, Head Knocker." Then introduce the body form. As you touch parts of the outline, have the children move that part of their body. Have a child complete the body puzzle on the floor. Attach the puzzle to the outline.
2. After you have carried out this activity with all of the children (it should be done over more than one day), post the chart at the children's eye level on the wall.
3. During a large group time, read the chart to the children. Have the children point to each body part that is mentioned.

**Reinforcement:** To extend this activity, you could have the children make plaster of Paris forms of their feet. When these are dry, have each child measure the length of his or her form. In order to compare the footprints, you could make a graph of lengths.

**Note:** Hap Palmer's "Shake Something" song can provide a good companion activity. If this is your first measurement activity, you may want to use some arbitrary measure instead of a ruler, until inches and feet are introduced.

## Fun With Feelings

### Curriculum Areas

Interpretation of emotions
Dramatic play cooperation

### Goals/Objectives

To dramatize an emotion.

### When to Use

Anytime

### What You Need

- Pictures expressing feelings

### Procedure

1. Have each child choose a picture. Say, "Look at the picture. Think about what the person is feeling. Tell me about your picture."
2. Since you want each child to respond and listen, do this activity in a small group.
3. Have the children choose a partner and then select a different picture. Encourage them to discuss the picture and then decide how they could act out a situation depicting the emotion.
4. Have the teams demonstrate.

**Reinforcement:** Have each child draw a picture or write a story about an emotion he or she has experienced.

**Note:** Once the children have dramatized their situations, the other children may want to discuss the situations as to whether the responses to the emotions are socially acceptable.

## "Angry" Experience Chart

### Curriculum Areas

Language arts
Pre-reading
Expressing feelings
Self-concept

### Goals/Objectives

To help children learn to use their words to express their feelings. To help children conceptualize the word "angry." Children will individually share one thing that happened that made them feel angry.

### When to Use

During or after group time

### What You Need

- Several large pieces of paper (24" x 36").or a pad of paper
- Large felt tip marker
- An appropriate children's book which deals with angry feelings

### Procedure

1. Read the children the book or story you have chosen. (*Peter's Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats or *I Was So Mad!* by Norma Simon are two good examples. *Peter's Chair* deals with several other emotions as well.)
2. After reading the book or story, briefly discuss with the children how it feels to be angry, and what kinds of situations make us angry. What does this word "angry" mean? How do we feel when we are angry?
3. Give each child an opportunity to share something that makes him/her angry. For example, "Alice, tell me something that makes you angry."
4. Write each child's response on the chart. Record what the child says as accurately as possible. Do not correct errors. The point here is to get the child to talk freely about his feelings. Make a note of the child's name beside the response.
5. Post the children's "Angry" Experience Chart on the wall at the children's level. Read the chart to them at least once, and repeat it if they ask and as often as they ask. Usually a couple of days is sufficient time for you to leave this chart on the wall.
6. Make this one of a series of charts dealing with feelings. Every day, for example, you can deal with tired, silly, glad, sad, happy, confused, excited, scared, worried, sick, frightened, etc. Let the children help you think of examples.

**Reinforcement:** A follow-up to this activity could be the creation of feelings puppets. Make puppets from craft sticks and circles cut from cardboard, then ask the children to draw differing faces on the circles, depicting certain feelings. Older children could then put on a puppet show with their creations.

**Note:** Rather than having the children share their responses while in a group, you may wish to seek out each child sometime during the day. For example, after the story has been read, try to solicit a quote to record on the experience chart. Experience charts should be the primary language arts activity in kindergarten and first grade. It is most important that the language experiences approach be stressed at this level.

## Family Survey Chart

### Curriculum Areas

Arithmetic/mathematics
Self-concept
Families

### Goals/Objectives

To help children understand that everyone lives in families.

To help children realize that families have some similarities and differences.

### When to Use

During group time.

As a directed activity during a self-selected time.

### What You Need

- One or more large sheets of paper, such as butcher paper or poster board.
- Large (4"-5") and small (2"-3") figures representing people, cut out of colored paper (optional). These may be pasted on the family survey chart instead of drawing the figures.
- Glue paste (optional)
- A felt tip marker

### Procedure

1. Have the chart outline prepared ahead of time with headings.
2. Say to the children, "Today we are going to be thinking about families. Each of us lives in a family. Some families are big and some families are small. Many families have both adults/grown ups and children in them."
3. Using yourself as an example (or another adult at your school who lives in a household if you live alone), make the first entry on the chart. Put your name (or the adult's name) on the chart first, along with an adult-sized figure. Then, add every other family member—using both their names and a visual representation (adult-sized and child-sized pictures for each).
4. Encourage the children to do the same, but do not insist. Ask each child in turn to give you the same information about his or her family to record on the chart.
5. After the information has been collected, discuss the chart with the children.
6. Display the chart on the wall at child's-eye level for a week or so.

**Note:** Teachers should be aware of responses from young children whose families are separated by divorce, death, etc.

7. You may wish to repeat this activity later in the year, keeping this chart for comparison purposes. By comparing the two charts, children will see that families change with time.

**Reinforcement:**

**Extension of Lessons:**

This activity could lead into additional readiness.

**Example:**

More advanced children could add several families together to find out the total number of family members in the whole class.

**Note:** You may wish to have three columns on your chart: one for the child's name, one for adults in the family, and one for other children in the family.

For older children, you may place titles at the top of the columns, but simply make tally marks in each column (instead of using names and drawings).

If family pets are suggested, you may add them by making another column. Or you can make another chart the next day for family pets instead of family members.

## My Family/My Home

### Curriculum Areas

Families
Homes
Self-concept
Similarities and differences

### When to Use

Anytime

### Goals/Objectives

To help children understand the uniqueness of their families and their homes.

To provide children with the understanding that there are similarities and differences between and among families. Children will construct their houses and place the family members in the rooms.

### What You Need

- At least 12" × 18" sheets of cardboard
- Boxes of varying sizes
- Pre-cut family figures (you will need quite a few)
- Markers crayons
- Magazines (optional)

### Procedure

1. In a large group, discuss the different kinds of homes we all live in; i.e., mobile homes, houses, apartments, townhouses, or condominiums. (Be sure to include every possibility in your class.) Have pictures of all the possibilities. Put these pictures on a flannel board or chart. Explain to the children that they will make their own homes at small group time.
2. Provide a cardboard platform for each child to build his home.
3. Have a variety of materials which children may choose for their houses.
4. Have teacher-made cut-outs indicating mother, father, brothers or sisters, and pets for the children to trace and color.
5. Once the figures are cut out, help the children stand them up in the rooms of their houses.
6. **Alternative:** The house could be a flannel story board and the children could take turns placing family members in it.

**Reinforcement:** This project can be expanded to four or five days by having the children cut out furniture for each room of their home. Children can look through magazines to choose the appropriate furniture. (This is an excellent way to have the children solve the problem of putting the appropriate furniture in the correct room.)

Younger children might enjoy a field trip to a new house after beginning this project. Contact a realtor and explain the goals of this activity and arrange for a visit to a new house. As you walk through, the children can compare, contrast, or describe their own homes. Then return to school and complete the activity by designing a house using the described methods appropriate for your age group.

**Note**: It is important to discuss members in a family with the children. Many children live within non-traditional family structures. They may wish to include someone who does not actually live with them. They may also wish to include someone who lives with them but who is not actually related to them. The story *Pete's House* by Harriet Sobol can be used to introduce this project or as a follow-up.

## My Home: Block Play

### Curriculum Areas

Dramatic play
Family life

### When to Use

Group time
Self-selection time

### Goals/Objectives

To give children an opportunity to explore concretely the dimensions of their home life experience.

### What You Need

- Blocks
- Adjunct materials such as:
  - Wood, rubber, or paper doll figures
  - Vehicles
  - Wood or rubber animals
  - Traffic signs
  - Doll furniture
  - Small pieces of wood in various shapes
  - Material scraps, including small rug pieces
  - Beads

### Procedure

1. Encourage children to talk about their home environment. You might help spark the discussion by posing some questions like the following:
   - "What are some of the different rooms in your home?"
   - "What do people do in the different rooms?"
   - "What parts of your home do you like best?"
   - "Where are the quiet places in your home?"
   - "Where are the noisiest places in your home?"
2. Invite the children to use blocks to construct their homes. Offer an assortment of other materials that children can use in imaginative play as they pretend the block constructions are their homes.
3. Despite all your planning, the children may choose to engage in some other form of dramatic play in the block area on this day. Don't despair! Have these materials available again many times in the future and be ready to facilitate play. Eventually the children will want to use the blocks to build and dramatize their homes.

**Reinforcement:** Although most first grade classes don't have block areas available, a teacher could use two-dimensional geometric shapes to form houses as a reinforcement to a math lesson. Then the discussion in Procedure 1 could be pursued.

## Inside My Home

### Curriculum Areas

Families
Shapes

### When to Use

Group time
Small groups

### Goals/Objectives

To help children feel secure that their homes fulfill their daily living needs.

### What You Need

- Large pieces of construction paper
- Magazines catalogs
- Crayons
- Pencils
- Glue
- Scissors
- For the follow-up, encyclopedias or pre-cut pictures of homes from other cultures

### Procedure

1. Provide each child with a "house." To make a "house," you will need two large square pieces of construction paper. Cut one piece in half diagonally to make two triangles (Fig. 1). Combine the other square piece of paper and a triangle with tape or glue to make one house (Fig. 2). This would make a good "follow directions" activity.
2. Invite the children to cut out magazine and catalog pictures of objects they use in their own homes.
3. The children then glue their chosen objects onto their "house." They could also draw in other objects or people, if they wish.
4. You could ask each child to tell the other children about the objects he or she pasted on his or her "house."

**Reinforcement:** This lesson could be extended to include a comparison of homes from other lands. *Cultural Awareness for Young Children*, (by Earlere McNeill, Velma Schmidt and Judy Allen), provides a comparison of family living.

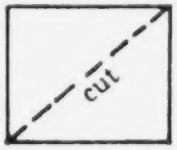



Fig. 1

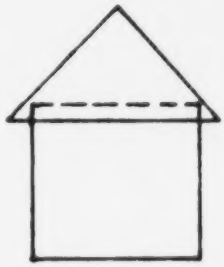


Fig. 2

**Note:** On the day you use this activity, be sure not to substitute it for a creative art experience. Rather than an art activity, this is a language and a cognitive activity. This activity is appropriate for kindergarten children. First grade children would need to leave out Procedure 1, draw their own homes, and continue with the other sections.

## Show and Share: Learning About Family Members

### Curriculum Areas

Family life
Oral language development
Relationships

### Goals/Objectives

To encourage children to think about the members of their families.

### When to Use

Group time or in centers

### What You Need

- Stiff paper
- Crayons
- Pieces of colored paper

### Procedure

1. Have the children bring objects to school that remind them of the members of their families.
2. Have the children show their objects to the group. As each child shares, encourage him to explain how the family member uses the object and/or why the object reminds him of that person. Also encourage each child to express how that object makes her feel about that family member.

   **For example:** A baby sister's bottle might remind a child that he/she sometimes wishes he/she was still a baby.

   **Reinforcement: Follow-Up Activity**

   After the children have related to the class their feelings about a family member, let them make a "Just Because" card. Give the children stiff paper, crayons, and bits and pieces of colored paper to make a card or cards for their families. Help the children write messages inside.

   To solicit parent cooperation with this activity, you could send a letter home explaining the goals and objectives. Include a list of things that a child might bring.

**Note:** In order to stimulate the discussion, you could bring objects to class symbolic of your family members and share with the children. It may be difficult for some of the children to discuss their objects. If they don't understand the point, ask the children questions about their objects. This activity is adapted from Susan B. Neuman and Renee P. Panoff, *Exploring Feelings*, Atlanta, Georgia: Humanics Limited, 1983. Reproduced by permission of Humanics Limited.

## GUS and GUSSIE Have Feelings, Too

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Dramatic play

### Goals/Objectives

To encourage children to say what feelings GUS and GUSSIE might have in a certain situation.

### When to Use

As a reinforcement tool to an activity which is intended to have the children express their feelings.

### What You Need

- Tape recorder
- Chart tablet

### Procedure

1. Read the following situation:

   GUS and GUSSIE find a baby bird which has fallen from its nest. GUSSIE wants to take the bird home to take care of it. GUS says the bird must go back into its nest. When they look for the nest they find it has been destroyed by a windstorm. They go home to talk to their mother. She decides to call the local naturalist who has training in caring for birds and will care for the bird until it is old enough to fly.

2. After reading the scenario, ask the children what they would have done if they were GUS and GUSSIE.
3. Record these ideas on the chart paper. Read these back to the children.
4. Have the children imagine they are GUS and GUSSIE and pretend they are in this situation. Tape this conversation.
5. Play back the tape and tell the children they have just created a play.

## GUS and GUSSIE Say It With Feeling

### Curriculum Areas

Verbal expression
Nonverbal expression

### Goals/Objectives

To help children relate to and express feelings.

### When to Use

During small group time is best, but this will also work with larger groups.

Can be done indoors or outdoors.

### What You Need

- GUS and GUSSIE dolls

### Procedure

1. Play "Simon Says," however, instead of Simon, use GUS and GUSSIE as the speakers. And, instead of touching body parts, concentrate the game on having the children show various emotions.
2. When you are introducing this game, you may want to have another staff member or a child volunteer play it with you once or twice so that the children will understand what they are to do.
3. Some examples:
   - GUS says: "Show that you are surprised to see a present on your bed!"
   - GUSSIE says: "Show that you are mad, because your dog ate your book!"
   - GUS says: "Show that you are sleepy!"
   - GUSSIE says: "Show that you are excited, because you are going to visit someone you really like!"
   - GUS says: "Show you are sad, because your parents got angry with you!"
   - GUSSIE says: "Show you are sad, because your parents got angry with each other!"
   - GUS says: "Show how it feels when you get to be the leader at school!"
   - GUSSIE says: "Show how it feels when you get a big hug!"
   - GUS says: "Show how it feels to fall down and hurt your knee!"
   - GUSSIE says: "Show how it feels when it's your birthday!"
   - GUS says: "Show how it feels to watch your favorite show on T.V.!"
   - GUSSIE says: "Show that you have done a good job brushing your teeth!"
4. As a variation on this game, after having the children express an emotion, ask them how it feels.

   **For example:**

   - GUSSIE says: "Show how it feels when you tear a hole in your shirt. How does it feel? Can you tell me?"
5. Another variation to this game would be to personalize it to fit your classroom.

   **For example:**

   - GUS says: "How does it feel when it's story time at school?"
   - GUSSIE says: "Show that you are glad when it's time to go outside to play!"

and so on . . .

**Reinforcement:**

1. Have the children choose partners.
2. Introduce the game "Mirrors." Two children face each other; one starts to move, and the other child attempts the movement at the same time. This is done in slow motion.
3. Once the children have become familiar with this game, vary it by having one child show an emotion, and the other child attempt to copy it.

**Note:** This activity has been adapted from Susan B. Neuman and Renee P. Panoff, *Exploring Feelings*. Atlanta, Georgia: Humanics Limited, 1983. Reproduced by permission of Humanics Limited.

## GUS and GUSSIE Say, "Thank You"

### Curriculum Areas

Language arts
Self-concept
Social development

### Goals/Objectives

To help children learn there are many ways to show appreciation

### When to Use

Group time

### What You Need

- Tape recorder (if you choose to make this a verbal exercise with feedback)
- Large piece of paper (if you choose to make an experience chart)
- Nothing (if you choose to make this purely a verbal exercise)
- Paper (to allow the children to write or draw about this activity)

### Procedure

1. Tell the children that GUS and GUSSIE, our special friends, have been living in our room long enough now to be thankful that they are here.
2. Ask the children to think of reasons that GUS or GUSSIE might be glad to be in their room and with their class.
   - You may tape record their responses to play back to the children at a later time.
   - You may develop an experience chart, using their responses.
   - You may encourage each child to draw a picture of GUS and GUSSIE in the class, or to write a short story telling the reasons GUS and GUSSIE are thankful.
3. Any ideas that the children come up with are fine. If the children have trouble thinking of reasons, you might have them first try to think of reasons why they are glad to be in the class, or what they like about the room, the teachers, their classmates, and the things they do there.
4. Have each child verbalize something positive about himself or herself or about the class. Accept anything the children say—even if it doesn't sound to you like something positive.
5. If a child cannot think of anything or is very negative, let the child think about it and go on to the next child. Give the reluctant child another chance later if he or she wishes to contribute.

**Note:** This exercise is intended for use after GUS and GUSSIE have lived in your classroom long enough that your children are well acquainted with them. This activity could be planned near Thanksgiving when you might have a unit on being thankful.

## Moods and Music

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Self expression

### Goals/Objectives

The child will be able to use music to say what is bothering him when he seems to feel sad or angry.

### When to Use

Anytime

### What You Need

- A variety of music on hand—country western, classical, children's, pop, rhythm and blues; paper, paint, scarves, sand, water

### Procedure

1. This idea is one you may keep ready when you notice a child is experiencing a mood change.
2. Have an open ended medium available for the child (paint, sand, water, finger paint, or scarves). When he is experiencing a mood change, use music and the open ended medium to allow him to express his mood.
3. You might say "I notice you are very happy now, would you like to listen to a happy tune and dance?"

**Note:** If a child chooses paint to express her mood, ask her to tell you how she feels.

## How Does This Make You Feel Game

**Curriculum Areas**

Self expression
Language development

**Goals/Objectives**

The child will be able to tell how he feels about situations.

**When to Use**

Anytime

**What You Need**

GUS and GUSSIE dolls

**Procedure**

1. Divide children into small groups.
2. Read one of the following situations to the children. How would you feel if or when:

   Your baby brother broke your favorite toy.

   Your birthday is coming.

   Your grandparents are coming to visit.

   You are sick and have to miss a soccer game.

   You and a friend have a fight.
3. Discuss with the group how they would feel in such a situation.
4. Have GUS and GUSSIE tell how they might feel.

**Reinforcement:** Repeat this activity using situations that happened in the classroom.

## Sometimes I Feel Scared

### Curriculum Areas

Feelings
Language development

### Goals/Objectives

To help children understand that everyone feels scared sometimes, but that they must deal with some of their fears.

### When to Use

Group time

### What You Need

- Pieces of large paper or a flipchart
- Colored markers

### Procedure

1. Read *In The Night Kitchen*, by Maurice Sendak.
2. Provide the children with several examples of times when we might feel scared, such as:
   - when we are in a new place.
   - at nighttime, when it is dark.
   - after we've had a nightmare.
   - when we meet new people.
   - when we are alone.
   - when people we love fight.
   - when we are sick.
3. Have children add other times they can think of when a person can feel scared.
4. Make the point to the children that often when we talk about what scares us, we don't feel all alone. In fact, we find out other people are scared, too.
5. Discuss ways we might resolve or ease some of the specific fears that have been mentioned. Have the children act them out. Some examples might include:
   - having a night light in your bedroom so that the dark doesn't seem as dark.
   - holding a friend's hand so that you feel safe when you meet someone new.
   - taking your favorite doll or stuffed animal with you when you sleep away from home so your "new" bed doesn't feel so strange.
6. Make an experience chart which illustrates some of the ways we ease our fears.

**Reinforcement:**

1. Draw a nightmare!
2. Provide a prop box on monsters with masks, make-up, etc.
3. Older children could make plaster bandage masks.

**Materials:** Plaster bandage (obtain from a hospital supply house), water, shallow plastic container, petroleum jelly, paint, glitter, styrofoam, glue and other materials to decorate the masks.

**Method:**
1. Smooth a heavy coat of petroleum jelly on child's face.
2. Place wet bandages on child's face; covering the entire face except the nostrils. The bandages will be ready to release in about ten minutes.
3. Remove from the face gently, let dry overnight.
4. Let child decorate with materials.

**Caution:** Practice before attempting with a group. Also, DO NOT dispose of the waste water in sinks. It will CLOG the drains!

**Note:** Halloween is a particularly good time to use this activity. Include a discussion about the differences in pretending to be scared as opposed to things that really scare us.

Above activity is from Susan B. Neuman and Renee P. Panoff, *Exploring Feelings*. Atlanta, Georgia: Humanics Limited, 1983. Reproduced by permission of Humanics Limited.

## A "Stuffed" Self-Portrait

**Curriculum Areas**

Self-concept

**When to Use**

Anytime

**Goals/Objectives**

To make a three dimensional replica image of themselves.

**What You Need**

- Safety pins
- Scissors
- Old clothes from home
- Glue
- Hanger
- Old nylon stockings
- String
- Crumpled newspaper or old rags
- Heavy yarn
- Collage materials
- Prints

**Procedure**

1. Make a head; use newspaper or rags to fill the bottom of a stocking that has been cut 2" from the toe. Knot it shut, and tie the knotted end to the stem of the hanger with string. Let the children decorate the faces to look like themselves and glue yarn on for hair. Use collage materials for facial features.
2. Place an old shirt on the hanger, button it, and stuff sleeves and body with newspaper or rags. Stuff mittens or gloves for hands. Tie them to the sleeves.
3. With safety pins or needle and thread attach pants to the shirt. Add a pair of stuffed socks which the children have chosen.
4. Place a hat or scarf on the head. Then place the "person" on a chair or hang from a wall hook.

**Note:** This is a weeklong project. Try not to rush it!

## Dramatic Play

### Curriculum Areas

Most unit areas
Language arts

### Goals/Objectives

To give the child an opportunity to act out feelings, thoughts, and or ideas. The child will use available materials to act something out (pretend)—either alone or with other children.

### When to Use

Self-selected time (housekeeping, block art, or sand areas)

Outdoor time

### What You Need

**Prop Kits**

A prop kit is a set of materials relating to a specific topic. The materials may be "real" or just pretend. The important thing is that they should all be safe. All packages and plastic bottles should be empty and clean. Glass and items that are sharp or that break easily should not be included. (Parents, friends, and garage sales are wonderful sources for prop kit items. Just ask!)

### Procedure

1. Provide a proo kit for the children to use and let them know that it will be available in a certain area of the classroom (or outdoors) for the day.
2. Allow the children to explore the items and use them as they wish. Also encourage children to use other items in the classroom which will further contribute to their play. For example, they may wish to make tickets or play money from paper or use blocks to represent things not included in the prop kit.
3. Observe the children as they play in the prop kit area during the day. You may wish to have the props available for another day or two. You may wish to reuse the props at various times during the year.
4. Some extensions of this activity include:

   At group time, before making the prop kit known to the children, read them a related story.

   Following a field trip, have a related prop kit available in the classroom for several days.

   After having a special visitor to your class, such as a community helper, have a related prop kit available.

   Prepare a prop kit to complement a unit the children are studying.

**Reinforcement:**

1. Let kindergarten and first grade children have a clown visit their class. Have the clown teach the children how to put on make-up. Give each child an emotion to act out (sad, happy, mad). Let the clown mime the difficult feelings (confusion, joy, loneliness).
2. To reinforce this activity later in the year, have the children make a collage of a feeling and dictate or write a story to accompany the collage.

**Note:** This activity should be repeated several times during the school year or made a permanent part of classroom activities. New prop kits could be introduced to keep the activity interesting and new.

## Happy and Sad Puppets

**Curriculum Areas**

Self expression
Awareness of emotions

**Goals/Objectives**

To have the children use the puppets to express happiness or sadness.

**When to Use**

Anytime

**What You Need**

- Have the children make puppets using paper plates and markers.
- Each child needs one happy puppet face and one sad puppet face.

**Procedure**

1. Once the puppets have been made, ask the children to come to small group time.
2. Have each child show his happy face, then his sad face. You might ask her to make a happy face like her puppet's face or vice versa.
3. Make up or read a sad situation and have the children indicate how the characters in the situation feel by using their puppets.
4. Have several situations ready to use with the puppets.
5. You might extend the activity by using songs such as, "If You're Happy and You Know It." Also you could change another song such as "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" by singing it in a sad voice or a happy voice.

**Reinforcement:** Use rhythm instruments and movements to accompany records that indicate happiness or sadness.

## You Help Me and I Help You

### Curriculum Areas

Fine motor skills coordination (eye-hand)
Social development
Social interaction
Language arts development

### When to Use

In small groups

### Goals/Objectives

To encourage each child to plan and execute a task with another child.

To encourage children to share.

### What You Need

- Peanut butter
- Non-fat dry milk
- Honey
- Wheat germ
- Measuring spoons and cups
- Large spoons
- Bowls

### Procedure

1. Divide children into pairs and give each pair a bowl and a large spoon.
2. Tell children, "Today we are going to make peanut butter balls. Each of you has a partner and together the two of you will work to make a batch of peanut butter balls. When you finish you will share your snack."
3. Have children follow the chart, measuring and combining ingredients. As much as possible have the children work out for themselves solutions to problems. However, when necessary, step in.
4. When the balls are made, emphasize to the children that they really shared the job and worked well together. Happy Snacking!

**Peanut Butter Balls**

| Full Recipe | Half Recipe |
|---|---|
| 1 cup peanut butter | 6 T. peanut butter |
| ½ cup non-fat dry milk | 3 T. non-fat dry milk |
| 2 T. honey | 1 T. honey |
| ¼ cup wheat germ | 2 T. wheat germ |

Mix together all the ingredients.

**Note:** You may wish to set this activity up in a learning center and have children do it in pairs as they enter the center. This procedure will take less equipment and be easier to supervise. Parents can be a source for food items or funds. The above activity was adapted from Susan B. Neuman and Renee P. Panoff, *Exploring Feelings*. Atlanta, Georgia: Humanics Limited, 1983. Reproduced by permission of Humanics Limited.

## Partners Share a Job

### Curriculum Areas

Social interaction
Community helpers

### Goals/Objectives

To encourage cooperative behavior among children. To encourage verbal expression.

### When to Use

Group time
Small groups

### What You Need

- Assortment of small and medium size boxes
- Map of your town or community
- Collage materials
- Scissors
- Several large sheets of cardboard

### Procedure

1. Group time—ask the children if they can explain what partners are. Some of the major associated concepts are that partners are people, partners work together, and partners help each other.
2. Discuss some examples of partners.
   - Parents (mothers and fathers) are partners.
   - Parents sometimes have business partners.
   - When you ride on a seesaw, you need a partner to ride on the other side.
   - Usually we take a partner on a field trip.

   Help children elaborate on how each of these types of partners work together.
3. Show the children a map of your town; have their homes already indicated on the map in some way. Discuss what makes up a neighborhood—streets, homes, stores, trees, sidewalks, etc. Tell the children that we are going to choose partners to create a neighborhood. (Be sure to emphasize the neighborhoods can be real or pretend.)
4. Use the boxes to make the homes and stores, add props such as toy cars, twigs stuck in sand for trees, pipe cleaner figures, etc.

**Reinforcement:** After an appropriate amount of time has passed, have a group of children make a map (two-dimensional) of their neighborhood using paper cut-outs for the houses and streets. This could also be used for a writing lesson by having the children print their names and addresses on each house.

**Note:** This project will need to be spread over at least a week's time. Above activity adapted from Susan B. Neuman, and Renee P. Panoff, *Exploring Feelings*. Atlanta, Georgia: Humanics Limited, 1983. Reproduced by permission of Humanics Limited.

## Giant Leaf Box Sculpture

### Curriculum Areas

Social cooperation
Creative expression
Seasons

### Goals/Objectives

To help children learn how to work cooperatively on a project

### When to Use

In the autumn.
Partly during outdoor time and partly during small groups.

### What You Need

- Leaves collected by the children
- Large protective floor covering, such as an old, clean, shower curtain or a plastic drop cloth used by painters
- Large empty cardboard boxes (one for every two or three children works best)
- Large brown grocery store bags or carry-all bags with handles (one for every two or three children)
- Lots of paste or glue

### Procedure

1. Assign children to groups of two or three and give each group a paper bag for collecting.
2. While out on the playground or on a walk, have each group collect lots of brightly colored autumn leaves. It is very important to allow the children to collect the ones they wish. (A few twigs, flowers, etc. may also be collected.)
3. When back in the classroom, spread out the floor covering in the art area. Assign each group a specific place where it will work.
4. Have members of each group work together to glue their leaves to the outside of a large box. They will be making a collage, but not on paper.
5. Some children may wish to glue together several smaller boxes before applying their nature material.
6. Display the giant leaf box sculptures in a hallway or in a place in the classroom where they can be enjoyed by everyone.
7. Some children may feel the need to go out the next day in search of additional materials to add to their sculpture before it seems complete to them.
8. The sculptures should keep well for a week or so. At that time the leaves' colors will have faded and the boxes should be removed.

**Reinforcement:**

1. After the boxes have been completed a day or so, have the children give you a list of words that describe their sculptures.
2. Read the children several fall poems, including some Haikus.
3. Create a Haiku using the children's words—a Haiku consists of five syllables on the top line, seven syllables in the middle, and five syllables on the bottom.

   **Example:** RED, YELLOW, FLOWERS
   PRETTY, CRUNCHY, ORANGE LEAVES
   ARE ON OUR BOXES.

4. Let the children paint at easels after this experience. They will probably create some wonderful fall pictures.

**Note:** If possible, arrange to have some colored snapshots of the sculptures taken. These can later be put on a bulletin board, along with the names of the group members who made them.

## A Descriptive Name Game

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Language arts

### Goals/Objectives

To encourage children to use adjectives to describe themselves.

### When to Use

During language arts unit.

### What You Need

- 12" × 18" light colored paper
- Magic markers
- Paints
- Crayons

### Procedure

1. Give the children a piece of paper; have them print their names vertically down the left side of the paper.
2. Tell the children to think of words that describe them and their personalities and begin with the letters of their names.

| **Example:** | **G** rowing | **G** rowing |
|---|---|---|
| | **U** p | **U** p |
| | **S** trong | **S** trong |
| | **S** ays | |
| | **I** 'm | |
| | **E** xcellent | |

3. When the children have completed the words, (you might have to write and or suggest some words) they may decorate the paper to their liking.

**Reinforcement:** The children might use the name of a family member to repeat this activity. The project could be used as a card for a special occasion.

**Note:** This activity is more appropriate for developmental and first grade. This might be fun to send home as a weekend project for the family. Parents like getting involved if asked.

## The Friendship Wall Hanging

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Cooperation

### Goals/Objectives

To foster cooperation.

### When to Use

Anytime

### What You Need

- Old flat twin-sized sheet or burlap (5' x 7')
- Measuring stick
- Black marker
- Fabric crayons
- Needle and yarn
- Collage materials
- Glue

### Procedure

1. Using the measuring stick and black marker, divide the materials into enough small rectangles so each child in the class can decorate one rectangle.
2. Each child should choose a rectangle and the materials to decorate it.
3. Encourage each child to make his rectangle different than his classmate's.
4. This project could be a separate center to allow each child to work alone or with one other child.
5. Once it is completed, perhaps your administrator could find a prominent place to display this labor of love!

**Note:** Encourage children to do their very "best" work. They will appreciate it more.

## Multicultural Experiences

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Cultural awareness

### Goals/Objectives

To encourage children to do or make something particular to their own heritages.

### When to Use

Anytime

### What You Need

Items representing the cultural backgrounds of the children

### Procedure

1. Teachers must be aware of the cultures of the children in their own classrooms.
2. Some ways of recognizing these cultures would be to a) have a variety of ethnic clothes available for the dramatic play area, b) regularly introduce foods from other cultures—make these cooking experiences, c) if you have a particular emphasis or theme, be sure to add the ethnic aspects, e.g., transportation around the world, d) invite parents to share parts of their childhood and culture, e) review the different learning centers in your room and add items from other cultures.

   **Suggestions:**

   **Block Area**—transportation toys from other lands, e.g., boats
   **Manipulatives**—games from other countries, e.g., marble games
   **Dramatic Play**—cooking utensils used
   **Quiet Area**—books about children from other places

3. It is most important that you make the cultures of your children an every day part of the classroom.

# V. Reinforcement Activities for Special Needs Children

## Learning by Touch

### Curriculum Areas

Social cooperation
Creative expression
Language skills

### Goals/Objectives

To help children learn by touching.

### When to Use

Anytime

### What You Need

- Items collected by each student: one box.

### Procedure

1. Take an observation walk to a nearby park or around the school.
2. Have each student pick up one item (example: leaf, rock, grass, etc.).
3. When the teacher and students return to the room, have each student share with others what he or she found by describing in one word how the item feels. (Example: a rock is "hard.")
4. Ask the students to make a collage out of buttons, different types of fabrics, beans, rice, crushed egg shells, etc. to help identify how each item feels different than the others.

**Reinforcement:**

1. Gather all items collected by students and put them in a box.
2. Have each student pick out an item other than the one they brought to the classroom.
3. Repeat procedures 3 and 4.

## Learning by Smell and Taste

### Curriculum Areas

Social cooperation
Language skills

### Goals/Objectives

To help children perceive through their senses by comparing taste and smell.

### When to Use

Anytime. A good indoor activity.

### What You Need

- Popcorn
- Popcorn popper
- Salt
- Sugar
- Trays
- Bags for popcorn
- Bowl for popcorn

### Procedure

1. Bring a bag of fresh popcorn into the classroom. Ask students if they know what it is. Ask each student to describe the smell in one word. Then serve the popcorn to the students.
2. Put salt and sugar into separate trays. Have each child touch both the salt and sugar and describe in one word how each feels.
3. Let each child have a taste of the salt and sugar and describe in one word how each tastes.

## Keeping Our Teeth Clean

### Curriculum Areas

Health
Self-image
Social skills

### Goals/Objectives

To help students understand how to properly care for their teeth.

### When to Use

During a unit on health

### What You Need

- Toothbrush for each student (Check with a local dentist on the availability of free toothbrushes)
- Toothpaste

### Procedure

1. Demonstrate to students how to properly brush their teeth.
2. Explain that improper care of the teeth will result in tooth decay and that children should brush their teeth after each meal.
3. Give each student, including GUS and GUSSIE, a toothbrush.
4. If possible, let each student have the opportunity to brush his teeth. You can help any student who is experiencing difficulty.

**Reinforcement:**

1. Keep a daily chart of students who brushed their teeth.
2. At the end of each week reward students who have remembered to brush their teeth three out of five days.
3. The reward could be a Happygram to parents.

**Note:** Teachers can obtain free information from the Oklahoma Dental Association, 629 N.W. Expressway, Oklahoma City, OK 73118

## Keeping Our Bodies Clean

### Curriculum Areas

Health
Social skills
Self-image

### Goals/Objectives

To help students understand how to properly care for their bodies.

### When to Use

In a unit on health

### What You Need

- Soap
- Wash cloth
- Two plastic wash tubs
- Towel
- Brush or comb for each student
- Mirror
- Article of clothing
- Dishwashing soap
- A sock for each student

### Procedure

1. Explain the importance of keeping our bodies clean.
2. Ask a child to help you demonstrate how to properly wash her face. Demonstrate how to use the correct amount of soap, etc. Have each child wash his or her own face and hands.
3. Explain the importance of putting on clean clothing each day.
4. Show the class how to properly hand wash an article of clothing, e.g., a sweater, then have each child wash a small article of clothing, such as a sock.
5. Explain the importance of keeping our hair combed and clean.
6. Show the class the proper amount of shampoo needed to wash hair, then explain how to rinse hair thoroughly. Ask a child to help you demonstrate as you go through the motions of washing and rinsing hair.
7. Ask each student to brush or comb his or her hair.
8. Set up a center with boy and girl paper dolls along with various types of clothing for each season of the year. Place a picture of a season on a table and ask the children to dress the dolls appropriately for each season.

   **Example:** summer—swim suits, shorts, hats, sunglasses, etc.

**Reinforcement:** Keep a daily chart of students who bathe each night, change clothes and brush their hair on a regular basis. Award Happygrams to each child who follows up on the assignment.

**Note:** You may obtain more information from:

Bristol Meyers
Products Division
Educational Service Department W.V.
45 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10022

## The Four Food Groups

### Curriculum Areas

Health
Self-image

### Goals/Objectives

To help students understand the importance of good nutrition.

### When to Use

Anytime

### What You Need

- Pictures of food from each food group
- Magazines
- Scissors
- Paste
- Paper

### Procedure

1. Explain to students the four food groups by giving examples of each.
2. Have students cut out and paste pictures from magazines of the food group studied on a particular day.
3. Draw a picture of all food groups.

**Reinforcement:**

1. Make a bulletin board displaying the four food groups.
2. Parents can help each child keep a diary of foods he eats during a one-week period. Have the children bring their diaries to class to get a Happygram.

## Feelings

### Curriculum Areas

Self-concept
Feelings

### Goals/Objectives

To enhance the children's self-concepts and self-esteem.

### When to Use

Anytime in a small group.

### What You Need

Children sitting in a circle.

### Procedure

1. Inform students one or two days before the class does this activity that they need to bring something from home that makes them feel happy.
2. Ask the students to share why the item they brought makes them feel happy.
3. Ask students to share with the class something about a special person that makes them feel happy and to tell the group why.
4. Ask each student to find something in the classroom that makes them feel happy and to tell the group why.
5. Ask each student to verbally respond to "Happiness is . . ." and "Love is . . ."
6. Ask each student to tell you something that has made her feel happy, angry, sad, etc.
7. Have each student verbalize "I feel . . . today." Ask each student why she "feels . . . today", if you desire.
8. People need to be hugged to be happy, healthy people. This game is like musical chairs. Students walk around the room listening to music and not touching anyone. When the music stops, have each child give one person near him a hug until the music starts again. Have each child hug a different person each time. If someone chooses not to participate, he may sit and watch. After the game is over, talk about how the hug felt to each student.

**Reinforcement:**

1. Repeat procedures 4, 5, 6, and 7 on a daily basis.
2. Make a VIP (Very Important Person) Bulletin Board where the students' good work is displayed.
3. Use Happygrams, Award-O-Grams, or a Letter from the Teacher.

## Let's Be Creative!

### Curriculum Areas

Sequencing
Attention span
Creative expression

### Goals/Objectives

To allow children to utilize their creativity

### When to Use

Anytime

### What You Need

- Drawing paper
- Crayons
- Chart or bulletin board with designs
- Letters or animals (make the same design for each student)

### Procedure

1. Give each child a sheet of drawing paper and ask her to create her fantasy animal. Encourage the students to think of a name for the fantasy animals. Display the drawings in the classroom.
2. Begin a story and allow each student to contribute an episode. Use stories the students already know or invent an original story.
3. Play add-on games in small groups. (I went to the park and saw a squirrel. I went to the park and saw a squirrel and a tree . . . etc.)
4. Display a chart or bulletin board with symbols (letters, animals, designs, etc.). Give each student a symbol and have him match it to the one on the chart.

## Our Family

### Curriculum Areas

Sequencing skills
Social skills

### When to Use

Small group/individual time, anytime of the school year.

### Goals/Objectives

To help children understand the function of the family unit.

### What You Need

- Paper
- Crayons
- Catalogs
- Scissors
- Paste
- Pictures of multicultural, single, and multiple families

### Procedure

1. Ask the students to draw a picture of their family (mom, dad, brothers, sisters, etc.). Display these pictures throughout the classroom. If necessary, help each student write the name under the drawing of each person. Discuss with the children the differences among their families.
2. Ask the children to cut out of catalogs (example: Sears or J.C. Penney) pictures of people to represent their families and paste them onto paper. Display these pictures in the classroom.
3. Display pictures of families of multicultural groups (mix family age and size; include single and multiple parent families). Discuss each of the pictures and have the children identify moms, dads, sisters, brothers, grandparents, etc. Encourage the children to bring photographs of their families to share with the class.
4. Ask the students to draw pictures of their family homes. Display these in the classroom and discuss the differences and similarities in the family homes.
5. Write the names of the family members on cards for each child, then ask the children to arrange the cards in sequence from the oldest to the youngest member of their families.
6. Ask the students to draw pictures of their family members and arrange the pictures from the oldest to the youngest.

## Table Manners

### Curriculum Areas

Social skills
Self-image
Sequencing

### Goals/Objectives

To help understand the importance of table manners.

### When to Use

Anytime

### What You Need

- Glue
- Extra paper for each student
- Scissors
- Copy of student worksheet for each student
- Everything necessary to set a table (centerpiece, place mats, utensils, plates, glasses)

### Procedure

1. Explain and demonstrate the following table manner rules: a) sit up straight with elbows and arms off the table while eating; b) unfold your napkin and put it on your legs; c) eat slowly with your mouth closed; d) cut food into small pieces and eat each piece one at a time; e) when finished eating, put your napkin at the left of your plate; f) ask to leave the table if you must leave before everyone else.
2. Demonstrate how to set a table.
3. Ask the children to set a table.
4. Have the children complete the "Let's Help Gus Set the Table" worksheet.
5. Give the children a special snack so they may practice the rules they learned in Step 1.
6. Demonstrate how to wash dishes, then ask the children to clean up after their snack and wash the dishes.

# NOTES

# NOTES

# NOTES

## Family Focus on Primary Prevention

Your child's school is using GROWING UP STRONG (GUS), a mental wellness promotion and drug abuse prevention program for children in kindergarten and first grade. Why a prevention program for children so young? Because **primary prevention** takes place before children are exposed to the problem of drug abuse. Think of primary prevention as a vaccine. Some vaccines stop disease and some make the illness less severe. GROWING UP STRONG has been used in hundreds of classrooms and has been evaluated as an effective primary prevention tool.

How does GUS work? GROWING UP STRONG focuses on a child's self-concept and self-esteem, teaching the following "survival" skills:

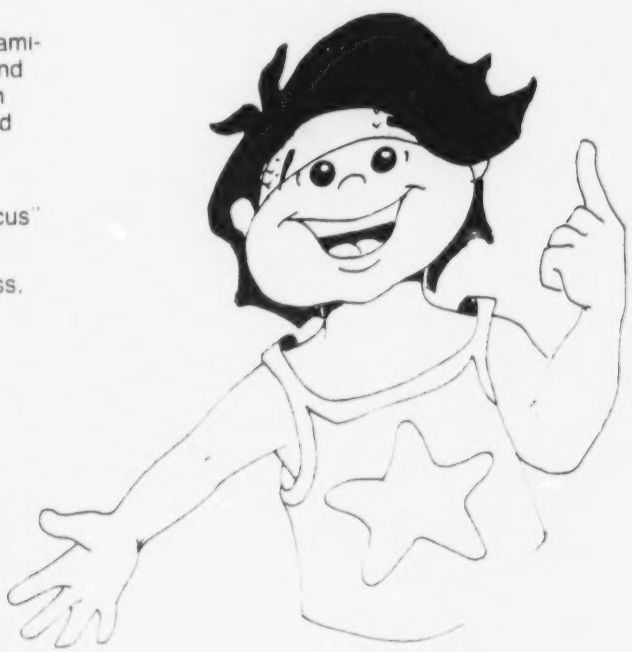
- Decision-making
- Problem-solving
- Accepting responsibility
- Assertiveness

GUS and GUSSIE, the characters that illustrate GROWING UP STRONG, will be your child's new friends at school. Expect to hear about them often!

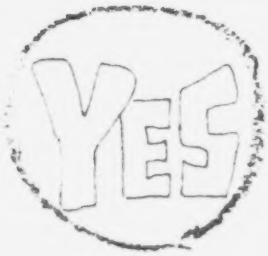
A successful prevention program depends on a partnership between the school community and families. The communication link between teachers and adult family members is "Family Focus." You can help GUS and GUSSIE by using the activities and encouraging your child to work on the "survival" skills at home.

On the back of this page is your first "Family Focus" activity.

Having fun is an important part of mental wellness, so **HAVE FUN** with your child!

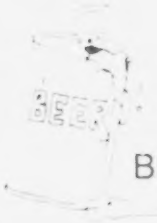


## CROSS OUT THE THINGS THAT ARE *NOT* GOOD FOR KIDS




## CIRCLE THE THINGS THAT ARE GOOD FOR KIDS

## COLOR IF YOU WISH

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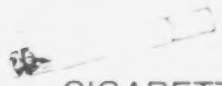

CIGARETTE

SANDWICH

CEREAL

PILLS

WINE

APPLE

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This activity sheet builds on the concept of making choices. Notice that the activity sheet instructs children to cross out things that are not good for kids and to circle things that are good for kids. This will require thought on your child's part and an ability to make decisions. Your child may change opinions with age and understanding, so several copies of this activity may be needed. Most of the choices are obvious for adults. But, what about pills? The doctor may prescribe medication for your child, but should your child think that pills are "good" for children? When are pills good and when are they not good for children?*

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Dear _____
I just want to let you know how proud I am of you. You are working so hard in school and have helped me many times. I'm especially happy because you _____

_____

Fondly,

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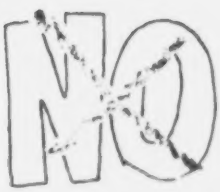
## CROSS OUT THE THINGS THAT ARE *NOT* GOOD FOR KIDS



## CIRCLE THE THINGS THAT ARE GOOD FOR KIDS

## COLOR IF YOU WISH

BEER

CIGARETTE

SANDWICH

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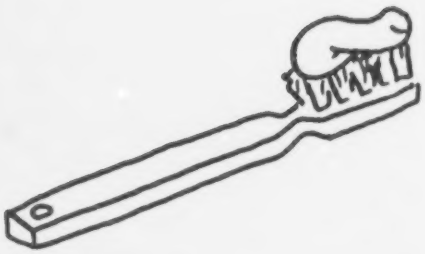

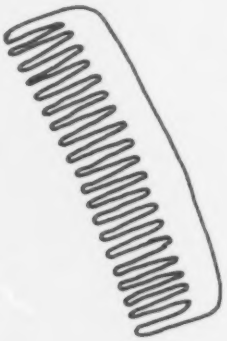

# Keeping Our Teeth and Bodies Clean

**Draw lines to show GUS where to use the toothbrush, the comb, the soap and washcloth. Color, if you wish.**

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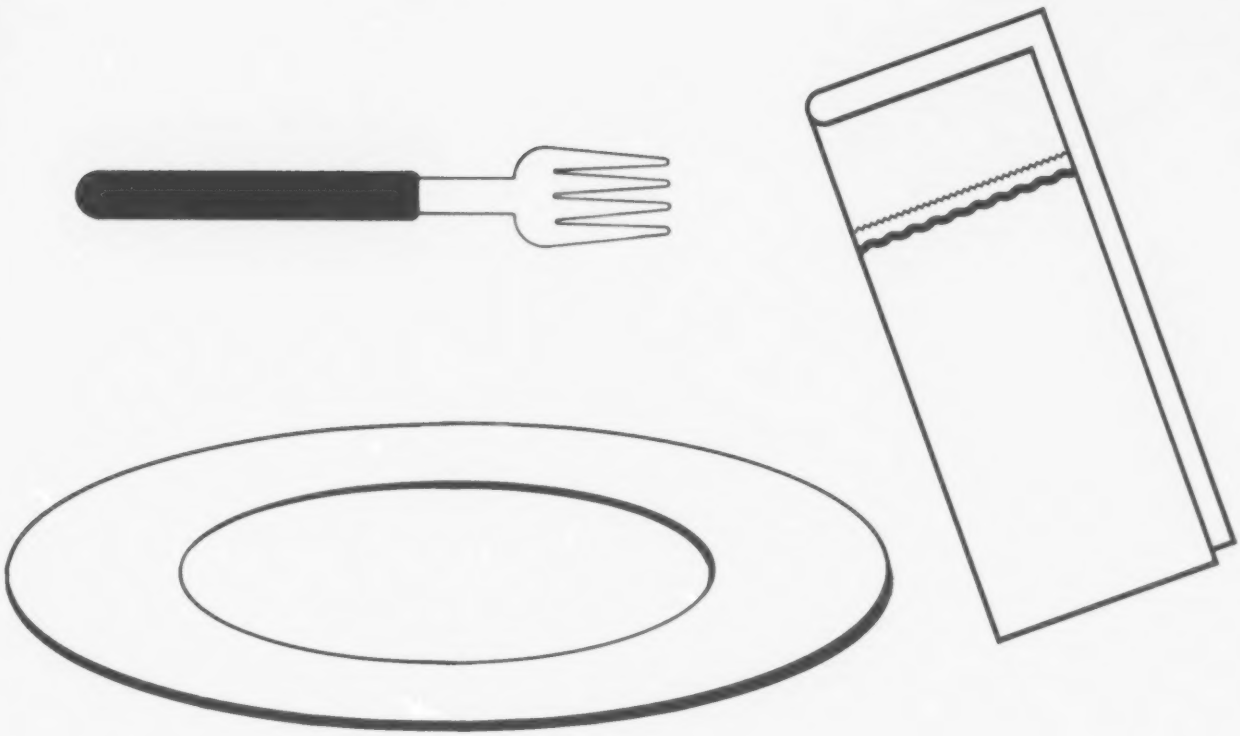

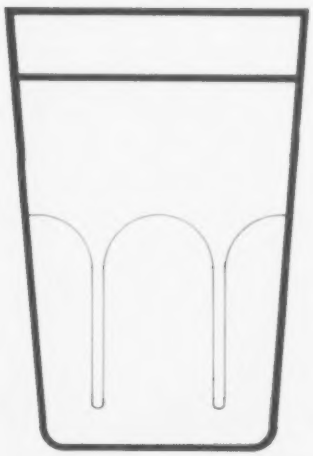

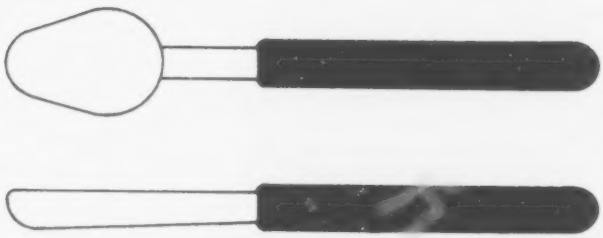

# Let's Help GUS Set the Table

**Cut out and glue these items on another page as they would be arranged on a table.**

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# Believe in Your Child

You're special to me...

I know you will always try to do the RIGHT THINGS . . .

Start training children NOW to grow up strong against DRUGS

Children WANT to do the right things. We can help them by letting them know that we trust them to do what is right. We give them strength by letting them know that we believe in them.

Let your children know that they are wanted and loved. Make them feel that they have a special place in your life. When children feel that they belong in a family, in a group, in a culture, they grow up to be mentally strong and able to choose to do the right things. Making the right choices is hard. It takes training. It takes practice. It takes support. When we give those things to our children, they have what they need for GROWING UP STRONG.

Because someone believes in me, I believe in myself

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This activity stresses the importance of making children feel wanted, loved, and trusted. Tell your children "family" stories. Share happy memories of your children's infancies with them. Looking at family photographs and helping your children learn the names of relatives who are seldom seen are other ways of giving them a sense of belonging.*

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# Let Children Solve Their Own Problems

WE LEARN BY DOING . . . WE LEARN TO RELY UPON OURSELVES

HELP US FIND THE ANSWER INSTEAD OF GIVING US THE ANSWER

Children are good at solving problems when given a chance. They learn by solving simple ones and get better as they grow older. Try asking questions which begin with the following phrases:

"How many different ways can you . . . ?"
"Can you make up a . . . ?"
"See if you can fix . . ."
"What would happen if . . . ?"
"How can you . . . ?"
"Is it possible to . . . ?"

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This family information sheet makes the point that helping children find their own solutions to problems, instead of always giving them the answers, will increase their self-reliance and problem-solving skills. You won't always be there to give the answers, so it makes good sense to let children solve their own problems when they can. Of course, part of learning how to solve problems is knowing when to ask for help.*

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# How do you help at home? Draw a picture.

**FAMILY FOCUS** *You will want to make several copies of this activity to have on hand. This provides an opportunity for your child to express "good feelings" about being helpful around the house. You may wish to have your child put up his or her picture for decoration or send it to a relative or friend. This activity also allows you to discuss with your child what he or she perceives as being "helpful." This may or may not be your definition at all! Young children may lack the verbal powers to express feelings, but they seem to be able to express feelings through art even if they are only making random marks with crayons. This activity will reinforce, in particular, the information covered on the "Taking Responsibility Around the House" information sheet.*

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# Help your child to become a better PROBLEM-SOLVER

## Try these games

How many different ways can you use a shoe box? A brown paper bag? A pine cone? A shovel full of sand?

What would we do if the door blew shut and we were locked out? How many different ways could we get back in? Which ways might be best?

How many ways can you think of to help a friend who is new at school?

Ask questions: "Jo has a cold. How can we help Jo to feel better?"

## Tips for parents

Give children time to talk about an idea. Be patient when they have trouble putting thoughts into words.

Watch while your children work on solving problems. This shows your approval and encourages them to keep trying.

When your child works hard and sticks to a problem, say, "I like the way you're trying!"

Pressure from adults can cause a child to focus on pleasing the adult rather than on solving the problem.

Problem-solving is hard work and takes lots of practice, support, and approval. Good problem solvers:

- try a different way
- seek new information
- don't give up until they have tried many solutions
- ask for help when they need it

Solutions that don't work aren't necessarily failures.

## Questions to ask yourself

How does your child help to solve problems?
Do you and your child solve problems in the same way?
What is your child's best problem-solving skill?
How does your child help to solve problems?

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This activity should become a part of your daily routine. When families are pressed for time, they may find themselves doing all the problem-solving to speed things up. If you find yourself saying, "Let me do that for you" or "Do it this way" or "I don't have time to wait for you to do that yourself," remember that your child may still depend on you to do all the problem-solving when he is 10 or 12 or even 22 years old! Practicing solving problems can be done in the car with your child to help pass the time. It can be done when you are waiting at the doctor's office, when talking with your child might be a helpful distraction. To make this a good learning experience, it will be important for you and your child to discuss the reasons behind the decisions he or she makes. It takes a lot of practice and self-confidence to keep looking for alternative solutions to a problem, instead of just giving up and saying, "This is too hard for me." A partial solution is better than none to most problems. Children build on experience. So, praise your child for "trying" to solve problems, rather than focusing only on successes.*

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# What makes you angry? Draw it.

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This is another page that needs many copies. Dealing with anger and negative feelings is a serious problem for many adults. These feelings are much easier to address in early childhood. Repressed anger can lead to physical ills, mental ills, and poor relationships with others. Depression is said to be anger turned inward and even infants can be diagnosed as depressed. Your child may want to tear this page up after drawing on it to "get rid of" the anger. (You may even want to use some of these sheets yourself when you are angry and can't seem to get over it!) Don't be threatened if your child draws a few unflattering pictures of you! Parents are not perfect people.*

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# Let Children Make Choices!

## CHILDREN NEED TO MAKE CHOICES. IT GIVES THEM PRACTICE BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR THEMSELVES

**Make small choices available:**

Which story shall we read tonight?
Would you like cereal or milktoast for breakfast?
Which clean T-shirt do you want to wear today?
Which of these sets of clothes do you want to wear to Grandma's?
Would you rather watch Sesame Street or Mr. Rogers today?

Once you give children a choice, you *must* accept the choice they make, even if it is not the one you prefer. So—you must give only acceptable choices. Give as many of these as possible and always accept the child's choice! This is the best way of teaching responsible decision-making. As time goes by, children will be able to responsibly make more and more choices, and to help in family decision-making.

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This family information sheet discusses the importance of providing children with practice in making choices. There are several prevention and assertiveness training programs now available for children ten years of age and older that focus on learning to say "no" to peer group pressure—especially where alcohol and other drugs are concerned. Children who are allowed choices and allowed to say "no" during their early years are more likely to be able to resist peer group pressure later in life. This is a decision-making area where you can definitely help your child develop good skills.*

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# Draw something that makes you feel good!

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This activity has many uses. It can be a child's first "thank you" communication as well as helping him or her focus on positive feelings. You will probably need several copies of this page. Your child could decorate his or her bedroom with "good feelings" pictures drawn over a period of months. Or, the front of your refrigerator or another place in the house might benefit from some good feelings shared by your child.*

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# Going to the Grocery Store

Children often have a hard time saying "no" to things which have been shown to them on TV, such as toys and sweet breakfast cereal. This activity will help them to say "no."

### Why learn to shop?

Your child will get better at saying "NO" to things he doesn't need.

Your child will learn to take responsibility.

Your child will feel good about helping to take care of the family's needs.

Your shopping trips will be more fun (and you may save some money, too!).

### **What to do** (make a list; go shopping together; check the list)

1. Make a grocery list on paper. Talk about the list with your children.
2. Let your children pick out two or three things from the list (things they can recognize on the shelf). Your children will be in charge of seeing that these items are put into the basket. Let them know this.
3. As you go up and down each row in the store, cross each item off the list when it is put into the basket.
4. If your children can reach the things they are in charge of, they may put them in the cart; if not, they can point to them and you can hand the items to them to put in the cart. (The children can reach low things for you.)
5. BE SURE to buy *only* what is on your list (even if you remember you need something else).
6. In the checkout line, while waiting your turn, let the children check over the list to be sure you have gotten everything on it.
7. When you are done, PRAISE your children for their good shopping skills and for helping you. (Do this even if things don't work out exactly as you wanted.)

### Tips

Be sure you and your children agree in advance about what their job in the store will be and what your job will be.

Have a snack before you go, unless you have just eaten a meal.

Instead of a written list, you could use drawings or pictures from newspaper ads.

Remember: this is a new way of doing things. It takes time to get it just right; it will get easier each time.

In the car on the way, perhaps you can sing songs with your child, such as "Going to the store with my father" or "Old MacDonald" or "Here we go round the grocery store." Your child may be able to teach *you* some songs!

**Have Fun!**

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This activity needs to be repeated many times with your child. However, it should not be necessary for you to duplicate this page unless you want to share it with someone. Like any new skill, the more times you repeat this activity with your child, the easier it should become. Grocery shopping seems to be an area of conflict for many parents and children, primarily because stores are usually designed to promote "impulse" purchases. Try out this activity. Let your child help you and be sure to praise your new assistant—even if you are tired and the trip to the store has been a quick one.*

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HELP GUSSIE FIND A WAY TO VISIT GUS. WHAT SHOULD SHE DO TO GET THERE SAFELY?
OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS
DON'T STOP TO TALK
AVOID BROKEN GLASS
STAY AWAY FROM THE DOG
BE CAREFUL
DANGER

There may be more than one right way to do this. Encourage your child to find more than one safe path.

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This activity is designed to give your child practice in making safety-related decisions. You will want to have several copies of this activity on hand to use with your child from time to time. Discuss the various situations which present themselves on this activity sheet. As your child discovers alternative routes for GUSSIE to follow on her quest to visit GUS, encourage her or him to verbalize the reasons behind decisions which are made. You and your child might even take a walking tour of your neighborhood to notice and discuss safe and unsafe situations.*

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# Taking Responsibility Around the House

Do household chores mean nagging at your house? Summertime often means more time at home for children and more helping around the house.

Sometimes this causes so many arguments that parents say, "I'd rather do it myself."

Children need practice learning to do their share. Children also need to feel good about doing it. This means two things:

(1) feeling good about being needed and helping someone else,
(2) having fun doing something useful.

**Some Tips**

1. Be sure children are assigned tasks they can understand and are able to do. Tasks should fit a child's attention span.
2. Let children have some choice about which tasks they do. Choices about when tasks are to be done are also helpful.
3. Reward children for tasks when they are done, but avoid punishing or nagging when they are not done. Rewards work best when they are a surprise; give a hug or a treat "just because I feel good about how hard you worked."
4. If you choose to have your children work toward a goal, be sure it is one which can be reached fairly soon. For five- or six-year-olds, it is best if they can reach the goal that day or the next. "If you help me with three chores today, you may go to a movie tomorrow."
5. *Remember*—it is important to reward children for helping you or for TRYING a job, or for doing their best, or for doing it better than last time. Do not expect chores to be done perfectly. That comes with time, age, and practice.
6. Try a game some time—let the children be the boss when you are cleaning their rooms. Let them assign the chores to you!
7. Remember to leave most of a child's time for PLAY! That is the most important work of young children.

**FAMILY FOCUS** *It might be helpful to post this particular information sheet in a place where you will see it often. The matter of household chores is commonly an area of conflict and misunderstanding between parents and children. Families are often amazed to hear that their children offer to help at other people's houses or at school—the same children who NEVER help at home! The major difference may be that children are made to feel good about helping at school or have fun helping at Aunt Jo's. At home, remember to emphasize behaviors that you like and not the ones you would like to see changed. That means making a fuss over tasks that are done and not punishing or nagging about those that are not done. This will take practice for you as well as for your children, but the results are worth the effort.*

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# Give Your Child Some Responsibility

Children need responsibility. They need chances to make choices; for example: which of two outfits to wear to school, what kind of juice to drink at snacktime, and so on.

Children need to know the results of their actions: if a child who is supposed to feed the fish does, the fish will be healthy. If not, the fish will die.

Remember: children need SMALL amounts of responsibility, and choices should be clear and simple. As they grow and learn to handle responsibility well, give them a bit more.

## HAVING A SPECIAL THING TO DO MAKES US FEEL IMPORTANT

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This activity will assist you in teaching your child how to make choices. You must decide what the limits are for your children in making particular choices. You must not overrule children's choices once they have been made. It is very frustrating for anyone to be offered a choice and then be told it was not a good decision. If you are uncomfortable about allowing your children to wear mismatched clothes, make it clear which clothes go together before offering them the choice of what to wear.*

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# Set a Good Example for Proper Drug Use

When children see us take medicine for every little thing that bothers us, they often get the idea that it is possible to fix every hurt that way.

This is also true of mental hurts—if we have a beer, eat some candy, smoke a joint, or even take a pill whenever we are down, children get the idea that it is possible never to be down; that if you are feeling down you can take something to fix it.

It is important that children know (1) being unhappy sometimes is part of life; and (2) there are better ways to make yourself feel better than by taking drugs! Talk it out, take a walk, or try solving the problem. There are also things we can do on a regular basis to keep ourselves feeling good: regular rest, exercise, eating properly, and learning to get along with others.

REMEMBER,CHILDREN LEARN FROM WHAT THEY SEE, AS WELL AS WHAT THEY ARE TOLD

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This family information sheet need not be copied except for sharing purposes. It is an important reminder that children learn from what they see. Children may get the impression that there is a quick fix for every hurt in life—physical and mental—if they see adults behave as though that were true. Many of the GUS and GUSSIE activities are aimed at helping children feel good about themselves and finding constructive ways to feel better (as opposed to drug "fixes"). It is important to help your child learn to talk about how to make herself feel better. Often this involves learning how to get along with others. Children need to know that sad feelings eventually go away and that nobody is happy all the time. Learning to cope with negative feelings is a part of developing strong mental wellness. You have an opportunity to promote mental wellness in your child through talking about solving problems instead of only treating symptoms.*

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# Value Good Health

## WE LIKE KNOWING ABOUT OUR BODIES AND HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THEM!

Children who learn to take good care of themselves and their health not only are less likely to become ill, but are less likely to be willing to eat or drink things which might be harmful. The best way to encourage children in good health habits is for you to set a good example. Helping your entire family develop good habits is important, too.

Plan ways to make these habits a regular part of your family's life:

- frequent exercise
- regular rest
- proper nutrition
- personal cleanliness
- proper tooth care
- plenty of laughter!

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This family information sheet focuses on helping your child develop good habits. Children who exercise with their families are much more likely to develop lifelong habits of physical fitness than children who do not. A regular exercise program can be beneficial for the whole family and can include brisk walks and many combinations of indoor and outdoor fun. Setting a good example is an important ingredient in teaching your child how to be healthy. Don't forget that plenty of laughter is a necessary health habit to develop for becoming physically and mentally strong.*

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OUCH! OUCH!
GUS IS HURT!
HE SCRAPED HIS ARM
AND TORE HIS SHIRT.

OUCH! OUCH!
HE'S OKAY.
HE KNOWS THE PAIN
WILL GO AWAY.

OUCH! OUCH!
HE HAS LEARNED
SOAP AND WATER
KILL THE GERMS.

OUCH! OUCH!
IF IT WERE WORSE
HE'D CALL A DOCTOR
OR A NURSE.

Color, if you wish.

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This chant will help you reinforce with your child the idea that not all hurts need to be "fixed" and that pains go away. Young children still like to have their hurt places kissed to make them well and a little sympathy is usually enough. However, some parents overreact to minor accidents or arguments with playmates, not allowing their children to develop good coping skills. Have several copies of this page duplicated so that, at various times, you and your child can have fun saying the chant together and your child can color the picture of GUS.*

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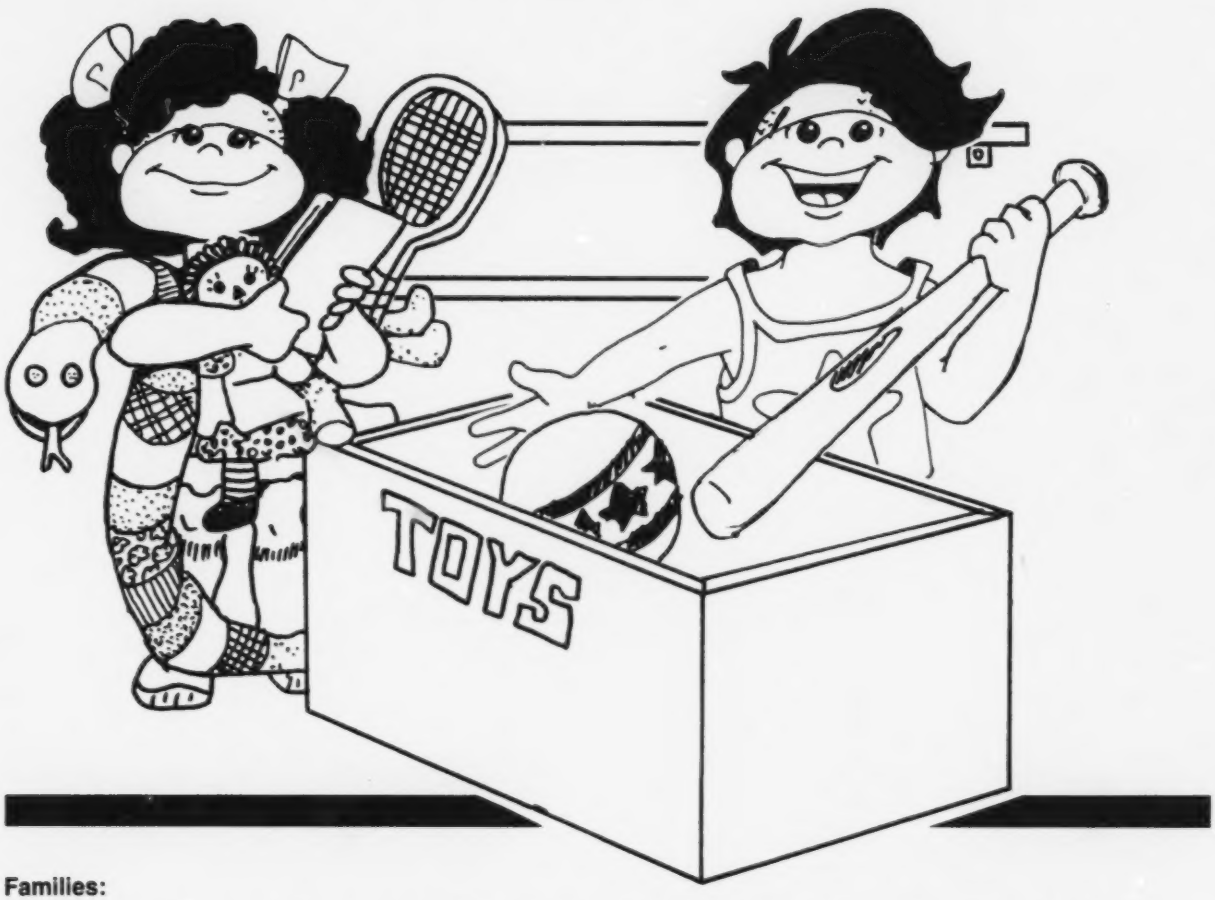
# LET'S HELP GUSSIE AND GUS PUT THE TOYS AWAY




**Families:**

Help your children find pictures of toys to cut and paste onto the shelves and toy box or suggest they draw them instead.

Ask your children these questions:

1. Why do GUSSIE and GUS like to put their toys away when they are done?
2. How does it help GUSSIE when her toys are neatly stored?
3. How does it help our family when toys are properly stored?
4. When is the best time for GUS to put his toys away?

**FAMILY FOCUS** *This activity sheet may be duplicated so your child can repeat this exercise. Children often wonder why they should put toys away if they plan to play with them again later. Also, the timing for putting toys away is sometimes an area of conflict. This activity should assist you in clarifying family policy or establishing rules for storage of toys. Helping GUSSIE and GUS can be a cut-and-paste or drawing activity for your child. Don't expect a young child to remember the rules without repeating them often. This activity is a pleasant way to help your child understand that there are good reasons for picking up and putting away.*

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# GUS and GUSSIE
## Observable Behavior Checklist

School: _____

Grade: _____ ID#: _____

Child's Name: _____ Sex: _____

Child's Birthdate: _____

Checklist completed by: _____

Teacher's ID#: _____

Checklist completed on: (date) _____

Other information: _____

_____

Answer every question. Select the *best* answer you can. If you have not actually *seen* something happen, select "never."

| | NEVER (you have never seen this happen) | SELDOM (once or twice in the past month) | SOMETIMES (three to four times per month) | OFTEN (one to four times per week) | MOST/ALL OF THE TIME (at least once a day) | Notes or Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Eager to try new things. | | | | | | |
| 2. Prefers to play alone most of the day. | | | | | | |
| 3. Plays different adult roles in dramatic play (pretends to be nurse, daddy, etc.). | | | | | | |
| 4. Eager to make decisions and to do things for himself or herself. | | | | | | |
| 5. Damages or abandons classroom materials rather than properly using, caring for, and storing them . | | | | | | |
| 6. Is willing to bargain or compromise in order to attain goals. | | | | | | |
| 7. Must be coaxed or told by adult to begin before entering into an activity. | | | | | | |
| 8. Refuses to participate in large muscle activity (such as running, climbing, etc). | | | | | | |
| 9. Adjusts rapidly to changes in routines or people. | | | | | | |
| 10. Stays actively involved in a chosen task until it is completed or for at least 15 minutes. | | | | | | |
| 11. Speech unclear to strangers. | | | | | | |
| 12. Uses words to express feelings, both positive and negative (such as, "You make me mad," or "I like you," etc.). | | | | | | |
| 13. Verbally participates in group time (sings songs with group, volunteers to answer questions, takes part in discussions, etc.). | | | | | | |
| 14. Expresses liking for children or adults. | | | | | | |
| 15. Avoids eye contact when speaking or being spoken to. | | | | | | |
| 16. Confident, stands up for own rights when challenged. | | | | | | |
| 17. Can get and maintain adult attention without "getting into trouble" to do so. | | | | | | |
| 18. Spends more time with adults than with own age group. | | | | | | |

Child's Name: _____

| | NEVER (you have never seen this happen) | SELDOM (once or twice in the past month) | SOMETIMES (three to four times per month) | OFTEN (one to four times per week) | MOST ALL OF THE TIME (at least once a day) | Notes or Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19. Enters into class activity within 10 minutes after arrival at classroom. | | | | | | |
| 20. Talks to adult directly (rather than sulking or acting out) when adult has caused child to feel angry. | | | | | | |
| 21. Shows concern for other people with words or actions. | | | | | | |
| 22. Gets into fights or quarrels with other children. | | | | | | |
| 23. Shows anger in a way that does not damage people or equipment. | | | | | | |
| 24. Seeks a child to play with or plays with another child when that child offers to play. | | | | | | |
| 25. Shares when he or she has at least enough for self. | | | | | | |
| 26. Cries for no apparent reason. | | | | | | |
| 27. Has temper outbursts and unpredictable behavior. | | | | | | |
| 28. Mood changes quickly and drastically. | | | | | | |
| 29. Takes responsibility for own actions, such as staying within the rules in an activity or in the classroom. | | | | | | |
| 30. Wets pants or has bowel movement accidents during the day. | | | | | | |
| 31. Shows pride in accomplishments or creations. | | | | | | |
| 32. Complains of stomachache, headache, arm or leg pains. | | | | | | |
| 33. Leaves (or attempts to leave) table in middle of snack or meal. | | | | | | |
| 34. Says, "I can do that!" (or makes similar statements showing self-confidence). | | | | | | |
| 35. Bumps into things and gets hurt. | | | | | | |
| 36. Offers suggestions for solving problems. | | | | | | |
| 37. Takes criticisms and reprimands in stride, without becoming upset. | | | | | | |

38. Has this child been diagnosed as having a learning disability, a physical handicap, and or other special need? ☐ no ☐ yes

If yes, please explain briefly:

Award

had a happy day.

Ask about it!

Happy-Day-Feelings

Award

had a happy day.

Ask about it!

Happy-Day-Feelings

Award

had a happy day.

Ask about it!

Happy-Day-Feelings

Award

had a happy day.

Ask about it!

Happy-Day-Feelings



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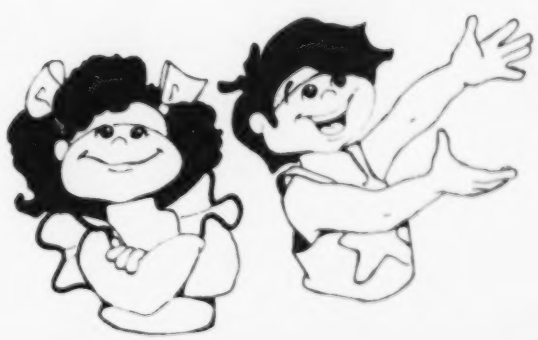
# Award -O- Gram

**This special award is proudly presented to**

_____

**for** _____

**signed** _____ **date** _____



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# happygram

I am happy to announce that

_____

has learned to

_____

**AND WE ARE PROUD!**

_____
date

_____
signed

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# GROWING • UP • STRONG™

GROWING UP STRONG (GUS) is a mental wellness and substance abuse prevention program for children in preschool through sixth grade with Spanish Bilingual and American Indian supplements. Developed by the Center for Child and Family Development at the University of Oklahoma in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, GUS is:

- ☑ **Research-based**
- ☑ **Adaptable**
- ☑ **Proven Effective**
- ☑ **Affordable**
- ☑ **Multicultural**
- ☑ **Replicable**

**GUS promotes a positive self-concept through enhanced self-esteem and:**

**Life Skills Development**

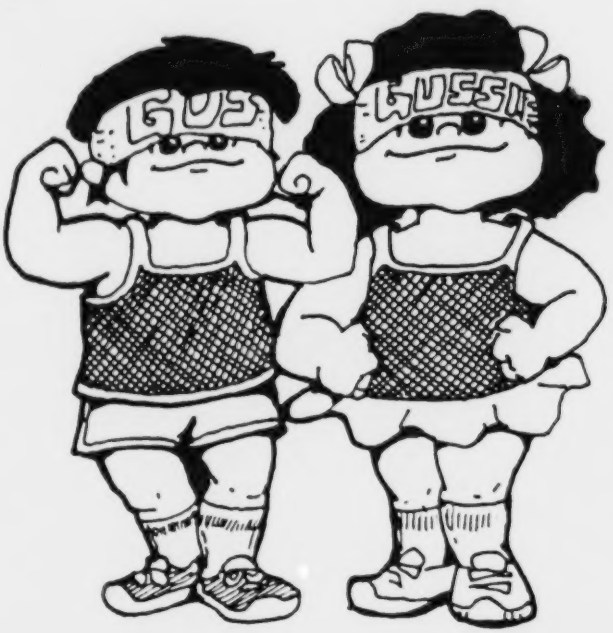
- decision-making
- accepting responsibility
- problem-solving
- assertiveness
- personal safety

**Family Involvement**

**Cross-Age Education**

- peer leadership
- peer support

**Cooperative Learning**




Center for Child and Family Development
555 E. Constitution St., Suite 221
Norman, Oklahoma 73037-0005
(405)325-1446

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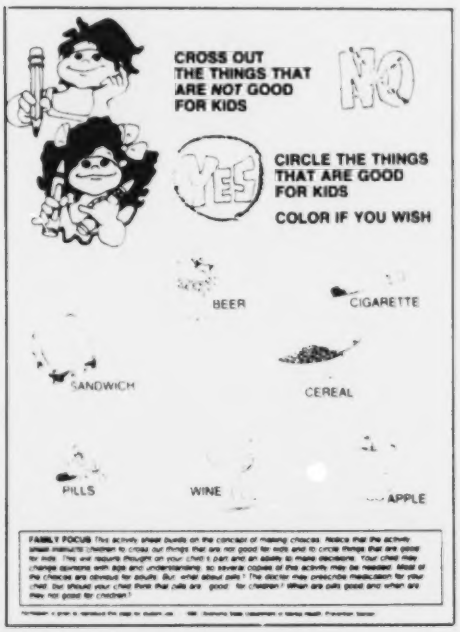
Continuing Education and Public Service
The University of Oklahoma

2/91

# Sample Activities from the GROWING UP STRONG™ Program




**Spanish Bilingual Sample**

## Plan Now for On-Site Training

The Center for Child and Family Development offers on-site training for GROWING UP STRONG from the preschool program through sixth grade. GUS training is individualized to meet the specific needs of each school district or child development program so the costs will vary.

On-site training ranges from a two-hour overview to a comprehensive training and evaluation package. Certified GUS Master Trainers are located throughout the United States to further reduce training costs.

**For additional information or to arrange on-site training contact:** Center for Child and Family Development, 555 E. Constitution St., Suite 221, Norman, Oklahoma 73037-0005; (405)325-1446; (800)522-0772 ext. 1446 (inside Oklahoma); (800)523-7363 ext. 1446 (outside Oklahoma).

# GUS ORDER FORM



## GROWING UP STRONG Kits

*We recommend one kit per teacher. Prices are subject to change without prior notification.*

**GROWING UP STRONG™**
**for Preschoolers (Second Edition)**
*Contains a GUS folder, Teacher's Guide, family involvement duplication masters, and a GUS poster.*
# _____ Kit(s) @ $25 = $ _____

**GROWING UP STRONG™**
**for Kindergarten and First Graders**
*Contains a GUS folder, Teacher's Guide, family involvement duplication masters, and a GUS poster.*
# _____ Kit(s) @ $25 = $ _____

**GROWING UP STRONG™**
**for Second and Third Graders**
*Contains a GUS folder, Teacher's Guide, family involvement duplication masters, and a GUS poster.*
# _____ Kit(s) @ $25 = $ _____

**GROWING UP STRONG™**
**for Fourth Graders**
*Contains a GUS folder, Teacher's Guide, duplication masters, and a GUS poster.*
# _____ Kit(s) @ $25 = $ _____

**GROWING UP STRONG™**
**for Fifth and Sixth Graders**
*Contains a GUS folder, Teacher's Guide, duplication masters, and a GUS poster.*
# _____ Kit(s) @ $25 = $ _____

**Spanish Bilingual Supplement**
**for Preschoolers**
*Contains a GUS folder, Teacher's Guide, family involvement duplication masters, and a bilingual GUS poster.*
# _____ Kit(s) @ $20 = $ _____

**Spanish Bilingual Supplement**
**for Kindergarten through Third Graders**
*Contains a GUS folder, Teacher's Guide, family involvement duplication masters, and a bilingual GUS poster.*
# _____ Kit(s) @ $20 = $ _____

**American Indian Supplement**
**for Preschoolers through Third Graders**
*Contains a GUS folder, Teacher's Guide, and a GUS poster.*
# _____ Kit(s) @ $20 = $ _____

Make your check, money order, or purchase order payable to the University of Oklahoma (no cash, please). A purchase order number is required on all orders to be billed to schools, agencies, and other organizations.

**Total Page 1** = $ _____

**Total Page 2** = $ _____

**Postage & Handling (10%)** = $ _____

**Grand Total** = $ _____

Send your completed order to: Center for Child and Family Development, The University of Oklahoma, 555 E. Constitution St., Suite 221, Norman, Oklahoma 73037-0005; (405)325-1446

**Name** _____ **Billing Address** _____

**Title** _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

**Agency** _____ **Purchase Order Number** _____

# GUS ORDER FORM

## Dolls, Puppets and Accessories



**GUS and GUSSIE**
**Soft-sculpture Dolls**
*GUS and GUSSIE are trademarks of the GROWING UP STRONG™ program. The dolls become the children's friends and confidants. Each set contains one GUS and one GUSSIE doll in a clear vinyl carrying bag. The dolls are clothed in denim shorts and GROWING UP STRONG™ t-shirts.*

*20" dolls are recommended for preschool through first grade.*

# ____ 20" doll sets @ $49 = $ _____

*24" dolls are recommended for second and third grades.*

# ____ 24" doll sets @ $59 = $ _____

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**GUS and GUSSIE Puppets**
*Colorful, felt, hand puppets for use in classroom activities preschool through fourth grade. Each set contains a GUS and a GUSSIE.*

# ____ sets GUS Preschool puppets @ $15 = $ _____
# ____ sets GUS Grade K-1 puppets @ $15 = $ _____
# ____ sets GUS Grade 2-3 puppets @ $15 = $ _____
# ____ sets GUS Grade 4 puppets @ $15 = $ _____

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**GUS and GUSSIE's Multicultural Friends**
*Six multicultural puppet friends for use with preschool through fourth grade.*

# ____ sets MCF puppets @ $45 = $ _____

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**GROWING UP STRONG™ Buttons**
*Colorful buttons proclaim "I'm GROWING UP STRONG!"*

# ____ sets of 50 buttons @ $15 = $ _____

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**GROWING UP STRONG™ Magnets**
*Vinyl covered magnets help children display their artwork and activities at home.*

# ____ sets of 50 magnets @ $25 = $ _____

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**Happygrams and Award-O-Grams**
*Brightly colored, printed awards for positive reinforcement that children can share with their families. Packaged for immediate use.*

# ____ *sets of 100 Happygrams @ $10* = $ _____
# ____ *sets of 100 Award-O-Grams @ $10* = $ _____

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**Total Page 2 = $ _____**

**Transfer this total to Page 1**

During the 1985–86 school year the Moore (Oklahoma) Public Schools, in a coalition with the University of Oklahoma's Center for Child and Family Development and the Prevention Section of the Oklahoma State Department of Mental Health, began piloting GROWING UP STRONG for Kindergarten through First Grade. GUS K-1 was evolved from Preschool GROWING UP STRONG, a mental wellness and chemical abuse prevention program for preschoolers, which was piloted and evaluated in Grady and Caddo counties in Oklahoma. Washita Valley Community Action Council Head Start and the Prevention Section of the Oklahoma State Department of Mental Health were partners with the Center for Child and Family Development in the original GUS. After two years of piloting, GUS K-1 went into publication in the summer of 1987. Working with an editorial board composed of teachers, counselors, and parents, the Center for Child and Family Development completed this important project in September 1987.